

PERSPECTIVE

THE JOURNAL OF THE ART DIRECTORS GUILD



US \$8.00

SEPTEMBER OCTOBER 2022

got cush?

EXPOSURE SEASON 2

Production Design by
Federico Laboureau

Powered by
cush  light

Concept, Create, Deliver



Signatory Shop

323-418-CUSH

www.CushLight.com

cushlight@gmail.com

WHO'S TALKING IN THIS ISSUE

Molly Hughes, Production Designer of *THIRTEEN LIVES* – page 68

Both Art Director Brandt Gordon and I became scuba certified while making the film, which helped our perspective toward the whole process.

Jeremy Hindle, Production Designer of *SEVERANCE* – page 59

The possibilities and the world of *Severance* are endless. I thought about how the creators of this space were inventing these severed employee characters, and Lumon could make the employees do whatever they want. Dan's writing was the license to do that, and Ben gave me the license to do it as a designer.



Ruth De Jong, Production Designer of *NOPE*, Director Jordan Peele reviewing a model of the Gordy! set. – page 22

As the design team got into drawing up the buildings, we simultaneously created a quarter-inch model of the entire town and stadium, led by Model Maker Adam Gelbart. This gave us a visual for creative meetings with Jordan and Hoyte, as well as helped flesh out the costs with construction.

Jefferson Sage, Production Designer of *MINX* – page 30

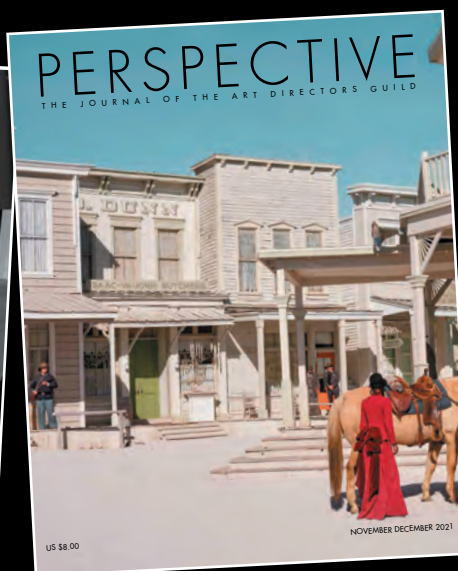
Several practical problems presented themselves during the initial design of the set for Bottom Dollar Productions. As mentioned, the stage size was a challenge. Besides the issue regarding available space (not enough and too short!), the existing rigging system was an ad hoc collection of mismatched pipes and set points of dubious provenance—a distinctly unhealthy menu of rigging choices.

Amy Lee Wheeler, Production Designer of the *GORDITA CHRONICLES* – page 39

I mean, really... finding crew anywhere in the world at that moment was tricky. Productions were popping up hourly with competitive wages that made enticing people, even to the Caribbean, a challenge.



SUBSCRIBE TO PERSPECTIVE

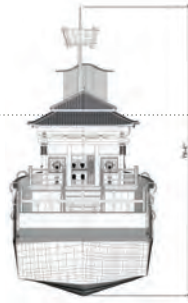


Rates: \$40 per year (6 issues)
(foreign postage will be added)
\$32 student/educator
(with current ID)

To subscribe, contact: Andrew Hagelshaw
andyh@adg.org | 818 762 9995
Your subscription includes digital
access at perspective.adg.org



CONTENTS



One Step Closer to the Dream

8

AFI 2022 Production Design Showcase

by Ernie Marjoram, Senior Lecturer



Building a Tangible Unreality

16

Designing Nope

by Ruth De Jong, Production Designer

Minx

26

Feminism Meets Soft-Core in the '70s

by Jefferson Sage, Production Designer

Creating 1980s Miami in Puerto Rico

36

The *Gordita Chronicles*

by Amy Lee Wheeler, Production Designer



"When You Wish Upon a Star"

44

Designing Concept Graphics for Disney's *Pinocchio*

by Karen TenEyck, Graphic Designer

Fun, Strange, Powerful

52

The Work/Life World of *Severance*

by Jeremy Hindle, Production Designer

Staging a Rescue

60

Creating the Cavernous World of *Thirteen Lives*

by Molly Hughes, Production Designer,
with Brandt Gordon, Supervising Art Director

Expanding Tolkien's World

70

The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power

by Ramsey Avery, Production Designer



ON THE COVER:

A CROSSROADS IN THE COURT OF LINDON. FROM *THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RINGS OF POWER*, PRODUCTION DESIGNER RAMSEY AVERY. DRAWN IN PHOTOSHOP BY ILLUSTRATOR ROBERTO FERNÁNDEZ CASTRO. THIS IMAGE, ALONG WITH THE GREAT TREE, UNLOCKED THE LOOK OF LINDON AS BRIGHT, GOLDEN, AND ALIVE.

5 CONTRIBUTORS

82 PRODUCTION DESIGN

83 MEMBERSHIP

84 RESHOOTS

Reinventing Nature ...we do it every day



Jungle Set built on stage for a TV Commercial

PLANTS | PROPS | THEME DÉCOR

christmas décor
holiday décor
topiaries
statues
hedges
arbors
lattice
trees...

Green Set, Inc.

motion picture plant rental



www.greenset.com • north hollywood ca • 818.764.1231

HISTORICAL EMPORIUM

Period Clothing

Full Line In Stock

- Victorian
- Edwardian
- Regency
- Old West
- Steampunk

Superb Service

- Attentive Staff
- Quick Shipping
- Easy Returns

Buy for the price of renting

800-997-4311

HistoricalEmporium.com



PERSPECTIVE

THE JOURNAL OF THE ART DIRECTORS GUILD
September/October 2022

PERSPECTIVE ISSN: 1935-4371, No. 103, © 2022. Published bimonthly by the Art Directors Guild, Local 800, IATSE, 11969 Ventura Blvd., Second Floor, Studio City, CA 91604-2619. Telephone 818 762 9995. Fax 818 762 9997. Periodicals postage paid at North Hollywood, CA, and at other cities.

Editor
DAVID MORONG
editor.perspective.dm@gmail.com

Copy Editor
MIKE CHAPMAN
mike@IngleDodd.com

Associate Editor
NIKKI RUDLOFF
perspective.nikki@gmail.com

Print Production
INGLE DODD MEDIA
310 207 4410
inquiry@IngleDodd.com

Publicity
RICK MARKOVITZ
Weissman/Markovitz
Communications
818 760 8995
rick@publicity4all.com

Advertising
310 207 4410
ADG@ingledodd.com
www.IngleDoddMedia.com

Founding Editor, MICHAEL BAUGH

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

NELSON COATES, *President*
JIM WALLIS, *Vice President*
CATE BANGS, *Trustee*
DIONISIO TAFOYA, *Trustee*

JUDY COSGROVE, *Secretary*
RICK NICHOL, *Treasurer*
MARTIN KLINE, *Trustee*
MIRANDA CRISTOFANI, *Trustee*

CASEY BERNAY
KRISTEN DAVIS
SARAH GONZALEZ
DINA LIPTON
ALEX MAZIEKIEN
RACHEL ROBB KONDRATH

EVAN ROHDE
ERIC ROSENBERG
CLINT SCHULTZ
SHELLEY WALLACE
TIM WILCOX
MARK WORTHINGTON

CHUCK PARKER, *National Executive Director*
JOEL COHEN, *Associate National Executive Director*

Subscriptions: \$32 of each Art Directors Guild member's annual dues is allocated for a subscription to PERSPECTIVE. Nonmembers may purchase an annual subscription for \$40 (overseas postage will be added for foreign subscriptions). Single copies are \$8 each.

Postmaster: Send address changes to PERSPECTIVE, Art Directors Guild, 11969 Ventura Blvd., Second Floor, Studio City, CA 91604-2619.

Submissions:
Inquiries about submitting an article, milestone, or any questions about the journal should be emailed to the editor at editor.perspective.dm@gmail.com. Material can be emailed, shared by Dropbox or other FTP site, or sent on a USB drive. Members and readers in all disciplines are encouraged to share their stories and images.

Website: www.artdirectors.org

Disclaimer:
The opinions expressed in PERSPECTIVE, including those of officers and staff of the ADG and editors of this publication, are solely those of the authors of the material and should not be construed to be in any way the official position of Local 800 or of the IATSE.



**THE ART DIRECTORS GUILD MEMBERSHIP INCLUDES
PRODUCTION DESIGNERS, ART DIRECTORS,
SCENIC ARTISTS, GRAPHIC ARTISTS, TITLE ARTISTS,
ILLUSTRATORS, MATTE ARTISTS, SET DESIGNERS,
MODEL MAKERS AND DIGITAL ARTISTS**

CONTRIBUTORS



RAMSEY AVERY

After receiving an MFA in Set Design from CalArts, Avery was Art Director and set decorator on the small midwestern townscape of *Roseanne*. He has gone on to bring to life the Second Age lands of *The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power*. He's

contributed, as an Art Director, to the future worlds of *Minority Report* and *A.I.*, eventually becoming the Supervising Art Director on projects spanning a breadth of time and space, such as *Team America*; *Star Trek: Into Darkness*; *Mirror Mirror*; *Tomorrowland*; and *Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2*. As a Production Designer, Ramsey has designed the films *10 Cloverfield Lane*, *Hotel Artemis*, *Peppermint*, the upcoming *No One Will Save You*, and the Sundance selections *Waitress* and *Right at Your Door*. He also designed a streaming pilot for Amazon/MGM's, *The Consultant*.

Ramsey recently designed the *Avengers* Campus for Disney's California Adventure in the Disneyland Resort, including the Webslingers multimedia interactive ride. He has designed or contributed to other attractions and events around the world, including a *Don Quixote* attraction (with flying pirate ships!) in Japan, the original Winterlit holiday decoration streetscape for the city of Santa Monica, and a Royal Saudi wedding in Riyadh. Along the way, he has kept a hand in theater, designing award-winning regional theater sets from California to New York, as well as a national Christmas tour for Martina McBride.



RUTH DE JONG

was born in San Bernardino and lived in Southern California until she was 12, when her family relocated to Charlottesville, Virginia. She received her bachelor of fine arts from Texas Christian University, where she majored in painting,

minored in photography, and played soccer for the TCU women's soccer team.

The summer before heading off to the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts to pursue her masters in painting, Ruth had a course-altering conversation with Jack Fisk. They spoke about designing films, as he too came from a fine arts background, and he encouraged her to give it a try before heading off to grad school. Ruth joined Jack as his assistant on *There*

Will Be Blood and continued to work with him as an Art Director over the course of the next 10 years, before she began designing on her own. It was through Jack that she also met David Crank, and coming up under Jack and David was the most incredible experience.

Ruth currently resides in Livingston, Montana, with her husband, producer Charlie Skinner, their daughter, Sadie (3.5 years) and their English Shepherd, Rye.



JEREMY HINDLE

is a Production Designer for film and television, originally from the UK but currently based in Los Angeles. His earlier credits include working as a set decorator and dresser on the television series *Ready or Not*, and working as the Production Designer on

the short *Nike: The Black Mamba*. Jeremy is also known for his work on *Zero Dark Thirty*, *True Story* and *Detroit*. Most recently, Jeremy has been working on the recent film *Top Gun: Maverick*, *Escape From Spiderhead* and Apple TV+'s *Severance*.



MOLLY HUGHES

spent more than a decade working as an Art Director, most notably in London on six of the *Harry Potter* franchise films with Academy Award-winning Production Designer Stuart Craig. She also served as an Art Director on *War Horse* and as

Supervising Art Director on *The Bourne Legacy*. Molly has been the Production Designer for *Hillbilly Elegy* for Netflix, *Thirteen Lives* for MGM and Amazon and *I'm Thinking of Ending Things*. Currently, she is working with director David Yates again, this time designing his film *Pain Hustlers* for Netflix.

She was nominated for an Art Directors Guild Award for Best Contemporary Film, as well as receiving Best Production Design nominations from the Chicago Film Critics, North Dakota Film Society, San Diego Film Critics, British Film Designers Guild and Georgia Film Critics for the project.

Molly has her MFA in Set Design from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts, where she advises when her schedule permits. She is married to James Lavino and is the proud Mom of two teenagers, Olivia and Owen.

PULP ART SURFACES

THE ONLY ECO WALL SKIN
MADE IN THE U.S.A. - PATENT PENDING

WHEN YOU NEED TEXTURE

100% ECO DIMENSIONAL WALL SKINS

818-821-3103
4021 Radford Ave. Studio City, CA 91604
www.pulpsurfaces.com

IN STOCK
LOS ANGELES - NEW YORK - ATLANTA
TORONTO, ON - STOCKHOLM - VANCOUVER, B.C.

WHEN YOU NEED EVERYTHING ELSE

BACKDROPS ROUTER WORK WALLCOVERING SIGNAGE VINYL
FLATBED PRINTING WINDOW FILM DESIGN SERVICE



4021 RADFORD AVE, STUDIO CITY, CA 91604
HELLO@RADFORDGRAPHICS.COM 818-821-3246

Design Your
WALLPAPER.com

RADFORD

graphics.com

MADE
IN Studio
City

CONTRIBUTORS



JEFFERSON SAGE returns to the world of series comedy television, with his work on the TV series *Minx* (2022). Raised in Reno, Nevada, Sage studied for a career in theatre set design at the College of William and Mary and at NYU; after school, Sage pursued a career in the New York

theatre scene—until a chance gig on a feature film landed him in a new world, and there was no looking back.

Eventually moving up to Art Direction, Sage worked steadily on projects like *Blink*, *Roommates*, *Analyze This* and *Donnie Brasco*, among others.

Moving to Los Angeles in 1999, Sage broke into Production Design on such TV series as *Freaks and Geeks* and *The Bernie Mac Show*—thus setting him on the path to all things “Comedy.” TV affiliations with Paul Feig, Judd Apatow and Jake Kasdan led to comedy projects in the feature world, including Jake Kasdan’s *Bad Teacher* and *Walk Hard*; Judd Apatow’s *This Is 40* and *Funny People*; and Harold Ramis’ *Year One*. Sage’s collaborations with Paul Feig include the hit *Bridesmaids* and *Simple Favor*. Recent work with director Craig Brewer on *Coming 2 America* (2020) is the latest in a string of feature comedy credits.

And, when not working, Sage lives with his family and dog in Los Angeles, where he maintains hobbies in music (guitar, mandolin), painting (watercolor) and reading (history, detective and nonfiction).



KAREN TENEYCK is originally from the East Coast where she received a bachelor’s degree in communication design. After graduation, she worked as a Graphic Designer and Art Director at several Philadelphia firms before going to study theatrical Production Design at

the Yale School of Drama, where she received several scholarships. While there, she was part of the team selected to travel to the Moscow Arts Theatre and bring back a production of Chekov’s *Ivanov* to Yale Repertory Theatre.

After moving to New York in 1992, she designed over 65 sets for many of the nation’s top regional theatres and opera companies, including Manhattan Theatre

Club, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, Denver Center Theatre, Austin Lyric Opera, Alabama Shakespeare Festival and South Coast Rep.

It was her work with Los Angeles Opera that convinced her to move to LA in 2000. Since then, she has designed graphics for over 50 movies, including *Water for Elephants*, *Zodiac*, *Alice Through the Looking Glass*, Paul Thomas Anderson’s *The Master*, *Trumbo*, *Rustin*, *Ad Astra*, *Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom*, Martin Scorsese’s *Killers of the Flower Moon* and Jerry Seinfeld’s *Unfrosted: The Pop-Tart Story*.

She has been a member of two Oscar-winning design teams—Martin Scorsese’s *The Aviator* and Steven Spielberg’s *Lincoln*. She also worked on the Emmy-winning design team of Steven Soderbergh’s *Behind the Candelabra* for HBO.



AMY LEE WHEELER

grew up between Oklahoma and Las Vegas in a family where drafting tables and construction plans were always present, but she preferred getting messy drawing with charcoal sticks or painting with oils. An endless curiosity lured her through several

mini-careers in architecture, graphics, printing, merchandising, and even model home interior design, each teaching ways to solve problems and express creativity. But storytelling was always where her heart beat loudest.

She paid her way through college at the Academy of Art University in San Francisco as a full-time architectural librarian, then started her journey in production on shows like *Sex and the City* and *The Office*. Her knowledge of construction and strong 3D modeling skills made her a valuable Art Director on a range of projects that earned her an Emmy nomination and over 20 years of experience. Her work includes films like *The Three Stooges* and *The Heartbreak Kid*, television series like *How to Get Away with Murder* and *Grace and Frankie*, and the three-year creation of Disney’s Golden Oak Ranch backlot.

Most recently, she served as Production Designer on the new HBO Max series *Gordita Chronicles*, the upcoming Netflix series *Freeridge* and dark comedy feature *A Lot of Nothing*, which was nominated for the Grand Jury Award at the 2022 SXSW Film Festival.

Amy Lee is also a published author of five novels in women’s fiction and the thriller genre with her first historical fiction due for release in the fall of 2023.

One Step Closer to the Dream

AFI 2022 PRODUCTION DESIGN SHOWCASE

BY ERNIE MARJORAM, AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE SENIOR LECTURER



On a hot August night, there was excitement in the air on the American Film Institute (AFI) campus. The sound stage had been dressed as an art gallery, not for a student production, but for the public opening reception of this year's Production Design Showcase, an exhibition of the twelve graduating designers' work while at AFI.

Two years ago, the twelve had assembled on this same sound stage from all over the globe. They had diverse backgrounds such as architecture,

interiors, theater, industrial design, advertising and studio art, but they all shared a passion for visual storytelling and a dream to become professional Production Designers.

Since then, each successfully completed the AFI Conservatory's renown curriculum of "hands-on" production-based filmmaking. In their first year, they designed a minimum of three original cycle film exercises, acted as Art Director on another three shorts and served as crew on a variety of

2022 SHOWCASE
GRAPHIC BY GRADUATING
FELLOW PATRICIA WITT.



their peers' productions. They participated in robust narrative analysis sessions of their own work, listened attentively to prominent guest speakers, participated in late-night discussions of the best in American and international films. They attended support classes in set construction, scenic painting and traditional Art Department skills such as sketching, drafting and model making. Classes in SketchUp, Vectorworks and Rhino helped prepare them for the virtual Art Department of the future.

In the second year, each of the Production Design Fellows applied what they learned and

collaborated with other disciplines to produce at least one original thesis short film, festival-ready.

At the reception, the atmosphere was festive as film clips from the many productions played around the gallery. The hard work of the graduating Fellows was celebrated by faculty, proud parents and graduates of the design program currently working in the film industry, many as members of the ADG. On the following pages, we are pleased to present select images created by the Production Designers of the AFI Class of 2022.

They are truly one step closer to the dream.

A. THE AFI SOUNDSTAGE DURING THE SHOWCASE.

B. L-R: AFI ALUM AND ADG MEMBERS BRITTANY BRADFORD, MARS FEEHERY, KATIE WHELOCK AND ERIC JEON.

C. L-R: ALUMNI SHANNON WALSH, ABBIE VANCE AND ERIC JEON WITH ADG GRAPHIC ARTIST ERIC ROSENBERG.

D. L-R: SR. LECTURER ERNIE MARJORAM, AFI ALUM KATELYN BUDKE, KRISTEN BUDKE, RACHEL KAHN, RHEA SOLANKI, EVAN WELCH, XI CHEN CHOU, ERIC JEON, SR. LECTURER SUZANNE FELLER-OTTO, MINOLAE JAIN AND BRONTÉ CAMPBELL.

E. AFI PRODUCTION DESIGN HEAD JOE GARRITY (L) AND SUZANNE FELLER-OTTO (R) WITH THE GRADUATING FELLOWS.



Daniel Berkman

DANIELBERKMANDESIGN.COM

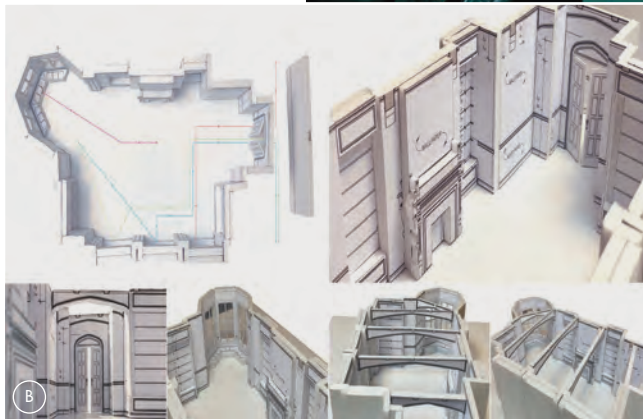
DANIEL BERKMAN IS A GRADUATE OF THE UCLA DESIGN MEDIA ARTS PROGRAM AND AN EXPERT IN GRAPHIC DESIGN. HE WORKED AS THE IN-HOUSE GRAPHIC DESIGNER AT BISCUIT FILMWORKS AND HAS CONTRIBUTED TO ART DEPARTMENTS FOR SHOWS SUCH AS HULU'S *QUICKDRAW* AND EVENTS SUCH AS *SETH ROGEN'S HILARITY FOR CHARITY* FOR NETFLIX. BERKMAN HAS ALSO WORKED WITH A MYRIAD OF FILM PRODUCTION COMPANIES DESIGNING TREATMENTS FOR COMMERCIALS AND FILMS FOR A DIVERSE ARRAY OF DIRECTORS. HE FOLLOWED HIS LOVE FOR FILM TO THE AFI CONSERVATORY, WHERE HE WILL BE GRADUATING IN 2022 WITH AN MFA IN PRODUCTION DESIGN.



A. *MOON*. HIDDEN CLONE CHAMBER. ILLUSTRATION-HAND DRAWING WITH PHOTOSHOP.

B. *GOOSEBUMPS*. SHIVER'S STUDY. WHITE MODEL.

C. *LOVE DUST*. JAMES' APARTMENT. AFI CYCLE SET BUILT ON STAGE. PRODUCTION STILL.



Cyrum Aytana Ramirez

CYRUMDECO.COM

CYRUM AYTANA RAMIREZ, ORIGINALLY FROM CANCUN, MEXICO, BEGAN HER CAREER IN VANCOUVER, CANADA, WHERE SHE STUDIED VISUAL ARTS AND DESIGN. SHE EARNED A BFA IN FILMMAKING FROM THE NEW YORK FILM ACADEMY AND AN MFA FROM THE AFI CONSERVATORY. BASED IN LOS ANGELES, RAMIREZ IS A STUDENT MEMBER OF THE SET DECORATORS SOCIETY OF AMERICA AND HAS BEEN THE PRODUCTION DESIGNER FOR SHORT FILMS, FEATURE FILMS, COMMERCIALS AND MUSIC VIDEOS. HER WORK HAS BEEN PART OF MULTIPLE FILM FESTIVALS, INCLUDING TELLURIDE AND MOST RECENTLY, THE ACADEMY AWARDS®.



D. *AVES*. DRESDEN BEDROOM. ILLUSTRATION. IN SKETCHUP & PHOTOSHOP.

E. *TOMOSHIBI*. TATAMI ROOM. ILLUSTRATION IN SKETCHUP AND TWINMOTION

F. *TOMOSHIBI*. TATAMI ROOM. PRODUCTION STILL.





G



H



I

Patricia Witt

PGWITT.COM

PATRICIA WITT IS A CHICAGO NATIVE AND GRADUATE OF WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST. LOUIS, WHERE SHE RECEIVED A BFA IN COMMUNICATION DESIGN. AFTER GRADUATION, SHE PURSUED GRAPHIC DESIGN AND WORKED FOR FOOTE, CONE & BELDING, A GLOBAL ADVERTISING AGENCY, IN THEIR CHICAGO AND NEW ZEALAND OFFICES. PATRICIA RECENTLY FINISHED PRODUCTION ON HER AFI THESIS FILM, *GORDITX*, WHICH WON \$15,000 FROM THE BRIDGES/LARSON FOUNDATION AT THE AFI INAUGURAL PITCH EVENT. HER LATEST SHORT FILM, *LADLE*, WAS SELECTED FOR THE 2022 LA SHORTS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL. BASED IN LOS ANGELES, SHE IS INTERESTED IN PRODUCTION DESIGN, SET DESIGN AND GRAPHICS FOR FILM AND TV.

G. *GORDITX*. AFI THESIS FILM. LIVING ROOM. SET PHOTO.

H. *GORDITX*. AFI THESIS FILM. LOCKER ROOM SET. ILLUSTRATION.

I. *GORDITX*. AFI THESIS FILM. LEADERBOARD. PROP DESIGN.



J



K



L

Faith Ivory

FAITHIVORY.COM

FAITH IVORY IS PASSIONATE ABOUT PRODUCTION DESIGN, COLOR AND TOAST. BORN IN SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, SHE ATTENDED BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY, WHERE SHE MAJORED IN ADVERTISING WITH AN EMPHASIS IN ART DIRECTION AND A MINOR IN GRAPHIC DESIGN. AFTER COMPLETING HER UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE, SHE MOVED TO LOS ANGELES TO WORK AS AN ART DIRECTOR FOR A GLOBAL ADVERTISING FIRM, MULLENLOWE. SHE HAS RECENTLY WORKED AS A PRODUCTION DESIGNER, ART DIRECTOR AND ART DEPARTMENT MEMBER ON SHORT FILMS, COMMERCIALS AND MUSIC VIDEOS IN AND AROUND LOS ANGELES.

J. *THE LOBSTER*. EXTERIOR HOTEL CONCEPT ART. PHOTOSHOP ILLUSTRATION.

K. *THE OPTIC NERVE*. MOS, ADVERTISING AGENCY, SET PHOTO.

L. *RINGING ROCKS*. AFI THESIS FILM, HOTEL ROOM. BUILT SET PRE-VISUAL ILLUSTRATION. PHOTOSHOP, ILLUSTRATOR.

Georgina Gutierrez

GEORGINAGUTIERREZ.COM

GEORGINA GUTIERREZ IS FROM EL PASO, TEXAS, JUST ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BORDER WITH CIUDAD JUAREZ, MEXICO. SHE HAS AN ARCHITECTURAL BACKGROUND THAT INCLUDES AN ASSOCIATE OF SCIENCE IN ARCHITECTURE, BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN ARCHITECTURE AND MORE RECENTLY, A MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE FROM CALIFORNIA COLLEGE OF THE ARTS IN SAN FRANCISCO. SHE HAS ALWAYS BEEN INTERESTED IN FILM AND HAS ALWAYS BEEN INVOLVED IN THE PRACTICE AS A SPECTATOR. TODAY, SHE HAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO BECOME PART OF THIS WORLD, FOLLOWING HER PASSION TO TELL STORIES THROUGH DESIGN. FILM CAN MAKE YOU FEEL EMOTIONS, SUCH AS HAPPINESS, ANGER AND SADNESS, AND SHE WANTS TO BE ABLE TO CONTRIBUTE WITH A DESIGN THAT WILL ACHIEVE MAKING PEOPLE CONNECT WITH FEELINGS.

A. ANASTASIA. CONCEPT ART HAND DRAWN WITH PHOTOSHOP.

B. LA BRUJA. PABLITO'S BEDROOM CONCEPT ART HAND DRAWN WITH PHOTOSHOP.

C. LA BRUJA. ABUELA'S WORKSHOP PRODUCTION STILL.



EJ "Yijie" Li

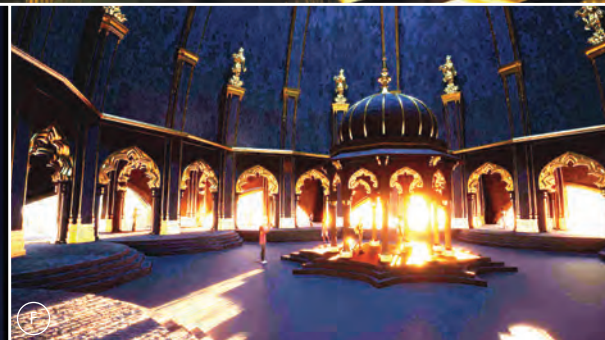
WWW.YIJIELI.NET

YIJIE "EJ" LI, FROM CHINA, GRADUATED FROM RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL OF DESIGN WITH A BFA IN INDUSTRIAL DESIGN IN 2019 AND IS NOW BASED IN LOS ANGELES. HE HAS PRODUCTION DESIGNED AND ART DIRECTED MULTIPLE AWARD-WINNING SHORT FILMS. HIS WORK, *LA CASA DE LA ABUELA*, WAS SCREENED AT FIRST, ONE OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL FILM FESTIVALS IN CHINA, AND THE FILM WAS ALSO NOMINATED FOR BEST PRODUCTION DESIGN AT INDIE SHORT FEST. HE WAS ALSO IN THE RISD ROVER TEAM DESIGNING AND BUILDING A NASA MARS ROVER FOR TWO YEARS AND WON THE SECOND PRIZE IN 2019 NASA HUMAN EXPLORATION ROVER CHALLENGE. HE WORKED AS THE PRODUCT COMMERCIAL PRODUCTION DESIGNER IN XIAOMI INC. FOR THREE XIAOMI COMMERCIALS IN 2017.

D. 2077. JAPANESE HOTEL LOBBY. ILLUSTRATION IN RHINO.

E. AWAKE. LAPD TAPE ROOM. HAND-DRAWN ILLUSTRATION.

F. *ETERNALS* ILLUSTRATION IN RHINO AND TWINMOTION.



Mehdi Bennani

MBENNANIDESIGN.COM

MEHDI BENNANI STUDIED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA AND RECEIVED A BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN ARCHITECTURE. HE THEN STUDIED PRODUCTION DESIGN FOR HIS MASTER'S DEGREE AT THE AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE, WHERE HE DESIGNED HIS FIRST THESIS FILM *END OF DAY*, AND CO-DESIGNED HIS SECOND, *IN WONDERLAND*. PRIOR TO AND DURING THE AFI PROGRAM, HE WORKED ON MULTIPLE BIPOC AND DIVERSITY SHORT FILMS, SOME OF WHICH HAVE BEEN SELECTED TO SCREEN IN NUMEROUS FESTIVALS INCLUDING CANNES.



G. *GOOSEBUMPS*, CASE STUDY. THE STUDY ROOM. CONCEPT DRAWING IN PHOTOSHOP.



H. *IN WONDERLAND*, THESIS, THE QUINCEAÑERA VENUE. CONCEPT DRAWING IN PHOTOSHOP.

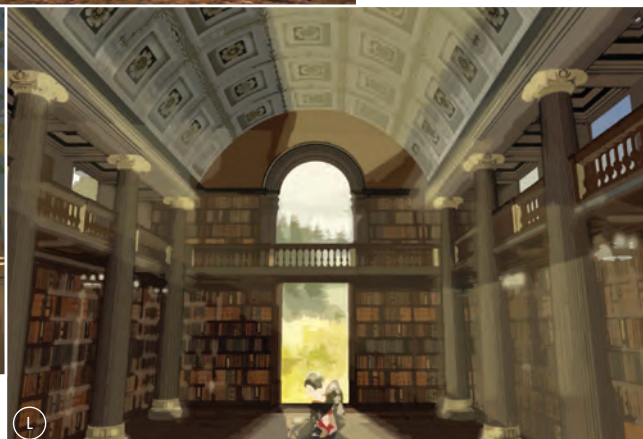
I. *IN WONDERLAND*, THESIS, THE QUINCEAÑERA VENUE. SET PHOTO.

Ziwei "Zoe" Ouyang

ZIWEI "ZOE" OUYANG GRADUATED FROM PRATT INSTITUTE IN 2019, MAJORING IN INTERIOR DESIGN. WHILE AT PRATT, SHE DID INTERIOR DESIGN FOR COMMERCIAL SPACES, INCLUDING HOTELS, RESTAURANTS AND SMALLER PROJECTS SUCH AS RESIDENTIAL SPACES AND AIRBNBS. SHE IS CURRENTLY A PRODUCTION DESIGN FELLOW AT THE AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE AND HAS WORKED ON 15 SHORT FILMS



J. 3D CONCEPT MODEL FOR A WESTERN TOWN DONE IN RHINO.



K. ART SALON INTERIOR FROM *HANDMAIDEN*. PHOTOSHOP ILLUSTRATION.

L. LIBRARY INTERIOR FROM *HANDMAIDEN*. PHOTOSHOP ILLUSTRATION.

Yibo Kou

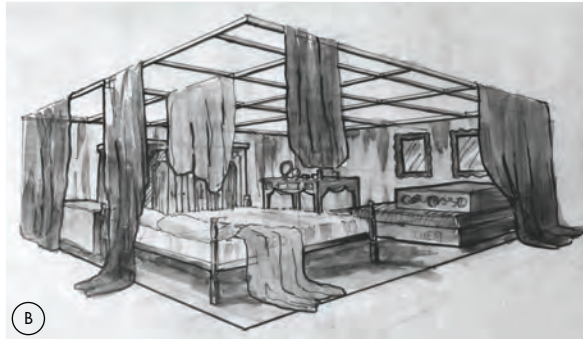
YIBOKOU.COM

YIBO KOU HAS A BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN ARCHITECTURE. AFTER PRACTICING IN ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN FOR A FEW YEARS, HE ATTENDED THE FILM PROGRAM AT CALIFORNIA COLLEGE OF THE ARTS. HE CONTINUES HIS PASSION FOR FILMMAKING AND DESIGN AT THE MFA PRODUCTION DESIGN PROGRAM AT THE AFI CONSERVATORY AND WILL BE GRADUATING IN 2022. DURING HIS YEARS IN CALIFORNIA, HE DESIGNED AND ART DIRECTED OVER 20 FILMS. THE MOST RECENT FILM HE DESIGNED, *PAY IT*, HAS BEEN NOMINATED FOR BEST HORROR AT LA SHORTS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL



A. *PERFUME*. ILLUSTRATION. PROCREATE.

B. *FLOWER GIRL*. ILLUSTRATION. HAND DRAWN.



C. *HANSEL AND GRETEL*. ILLUSTRATION. PROCREATE.



Abbie Vance

ABBIEVANCE.COM

ABBIE VANCE HAS EIGHT YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN THE ART DEPARTMENT FOR FILM AND TELEVISION. RAISED IN RURAL MONTANA, AFTER ACHIEVING A BA IN MEDIA ARTS PRODUCTION DESIGN AND A THEATER DESIGN MINOR FROM UTAH'S BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY, HER PROFESSIONAL FILM CREDITS INCLUDE ART DIRECTOR FOR *THE WOLF OF SNOW HOLLOW* AND PROPMASTER FOR *NINE DAYS*. HER COMMERCIAL PRODUCTION DESIGN CLIENTS INCLUDE TEAM LIQUID AND ENTRATA, AND HER SPECULATIVE PERSONAL WORK INCLUDES CONCEPTS FOR STEVEN SODERBERGH'S *THE KNICK* AND DISNEY'S *JOHN CARTER*. SHE IS PASSIONATE ABOUT SEEKING A LIFE FULL OF LEARNING AND TELLING BIG STORIES THAT INSPIRE EVEN BIGGER FEELINGS



D. *JOHN CARTER OF MARS*. ZONDANGA CITY. CONCEPT ILLUSTRATION. HAND DRAWING, PROCREATE, PHOTOSHOP.

E. *THE KNICK*. HOSPITAL ENTRANCE HALL. CONCEPT ILLUSTRATION. PHOTOSHOP.



F. *CARCASS* (SHORT, 2023) GABRIEL'S COTTAGE SET PHOTO: BUILT ON LOCATION IN CASTAIC, CA.

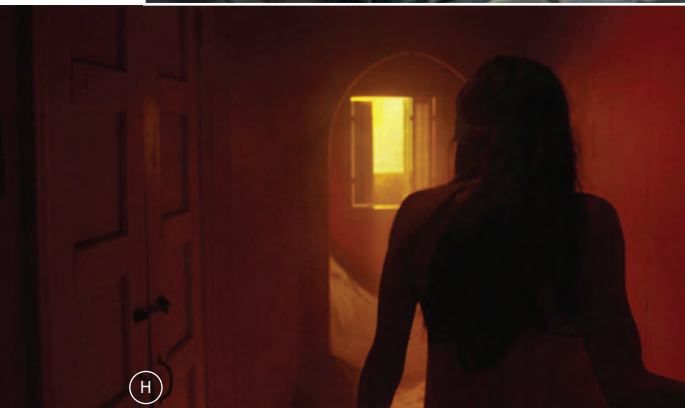




Brian Spadafora

SPADAFORA.STUDIO

AFTER COMPLETING HIS UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE IN STUDIO ART AT WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY, BRIAN SPADAFORA STUDIED SCULPTURE AT THE ACCADEMIA DI BELLI ARTI DI FIRENZE AS PART OF HIS CORE CURRICULUM FOR A GRADUATE DEGREE IN ITALIAN LANGUAGE & CULTURE AT MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE. AFTER AN INTERNSHIP AT THE PEGGY GUGGENHEIM COLLECTION IN VENICE, ITALY, SPADAFORA ACTED AS THE PRODUCTION DESIGNER FOR A SHORT FILM AT THE LONDON FILM SCHOOL. MORE RECENTLY, BRIAN ASSISTED IN THE FABRICATION OF LARGE-SCALE PUBLIC ARTWORKS UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE FLORIDA-BASED SCULPTOR MARK AELING.



G. *HIGHLANDER*.
ILLUSTRATION. PENCIL
& INK AND PAINTED IN
PROCREATE.

H. PRODUCTION STILL AN
INTERIOR BODY (MOS),
35MM SHORT FILM.

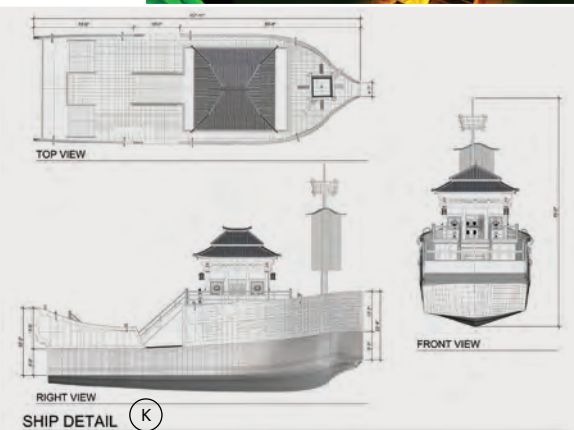
I. DILAPIDATED STEEL MILL.
CONCEPT RENDER. RHINO
AND TWINMOTION.



Ye "Yara" Wang

YARAWANG.COM

YE "YARA" WANG IS A 2022 PRODUCTION DESIGN FELLOW AT AFI. SHE GRADUATED FROM THE SAVANNAH COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN, WITH A BFA DEGREE IN PRODUCTION DESIGN AND ART DIRECTION. MASTERING THE SKILLS FOR GENRE FILM DESIGN, SHE HAS BUILT WORLDS FOR OVER 20 SHORT FILMS RANGING FROM CHINESE PERIOD PIECES TO AMERICAN SCIENCE FICTION. NOW SHE IS IN THE ADG'S PRODUCTION DESIGN INITIATIVE PROGRAM.



J. *TOMB RAIDERS NOTES*.
CONCEPT ILLUSTRATION
MODELED IN RHINO
AND RENDERED IN
TWINMOTION AND
PHOTOSHOP RENDERING.

K. *TOMB RAIDERS
NOTES*. BOAT PLAN AND
ELEVATIONS.

L. *KODAMA*. SET PHOTO,
35MM FILM BUILT ON
SOUND STAGE



Building a Tangible Unreality DESIGNING NOPE

BY RUTH DE JONG, PRODUCTION DESIGNER

A

A. EM LAUNCHING THE 'JUPE' BALLOON. ILLUSTRATION BY JOANNA BUSH.

B. THE WINKIN' WELL AT JUPITER'S CLAIM. GROUND UP BUILD ON LOCATION IN AGUA DULCE. SET PHOTO.

Jordan Peele called me the summer of 2020 to discuss what is today *Nope*. The way people feared getting into the water after watching *Jaws*, Jordan explained over several hours, was the same reaction he wanted people to have with the sky. He was determined to pull off this larger-than-life spectacle and make this immersive film about the presence of something other. "If we make this 'real,' then we've achieved," he told me.

The script was still in the process of being written, and my notes from that call—raw, unfiltered, early conceptualizations—provided the framework to which I constantly referred throughout the preproduction. I couldn't have been more excited for what I realized was a unique opportunity to truly world-build.

This would be my second collaboration with Jordan, and unlike on *Us*, I started early so we had the time to dream big. And BIG we went! My task from Jordan was to use my imagination but make sure to ground the world in the most honest, natural way possible. The spectacle was the unbelievable, but what if, all of a sudden, it was fully believable?

The film industry was still in the throngs of COVID, but the plan was to start prepping in the fall of 2020 with filming to begin in February 2021. I can't remember how far into prep we were when Jordan eventually made the call to push to a June shoot start, primarily because COVID was still unpredictable, and waiting would mean a smoother shooting experience. An added benefit



was more time to hone the story and continue writing. Jordan was adamant that I stay on throughout this push, a decision which—from a production standpoint—turned out to be brilliant.

The prep time Jordan demanded was crucial to the design and execution of the film. I was able to go deep into research: the origins of the Black cowboy in the American West, the world of training animals for motion pictures, western ghost towns/theme parks, '90s TV sets and so on. It allowed us to thoroughly work through every single detail. And detail is what Jordan thrives on. There is nuance to every single frame, and great consideration goes into every prop, graphic, vehicle, horse, saddle, etc.



Haywood Ranch

The production started scouting ranches in early fall, with our first location to lock being the Haywood Ranch. We scouted many, but it was a lead from the film's head wrangler, Bobby Lovgren, that led us to Firestone Ranch. This ranch was serendipitously connected to what would become the location for our frontier town (Jupiter's Claim), both out in the Agua Dulce/Santa Clarita area north of LA. Making these selections allowed Jordan to write specifically to the locations, and me to design exactly per the script.

Firestone Ranch was the anchor of the entire film. It was the first location the production team visited in person, and we fell in love with it immediately. Initially we said, "No, no we must keep looking," as we were hesitant to jump right into it at first sight, but scouting several more only solidified that this was indeed the one.

The ranch is nestled in a bowl surrounded by hills, giving it a naturally enclosed feeling. The sky was vast, and the Art Department developed a layout that enabled us to utilize the valley as well as the connecting property for Jupiter's Claim. Because of this, I was able to give Jordan and cinematographer Hoyte Van Hoytema 360-degree, camera-ready views of both locations.

Originally owned by Los Angeles' pioneering civil engineer William Mulholland, the property included an existing, castle-like structure. I was into the house, but it has a peculiar style, and its location on the ranch didn't make sense story-wise. Several visits later, Jordan stood in what was at the time, a parking area off the stables (in fact, a landing pad for horse manure and stall muck-outs) and said, "You need to build the house right here."

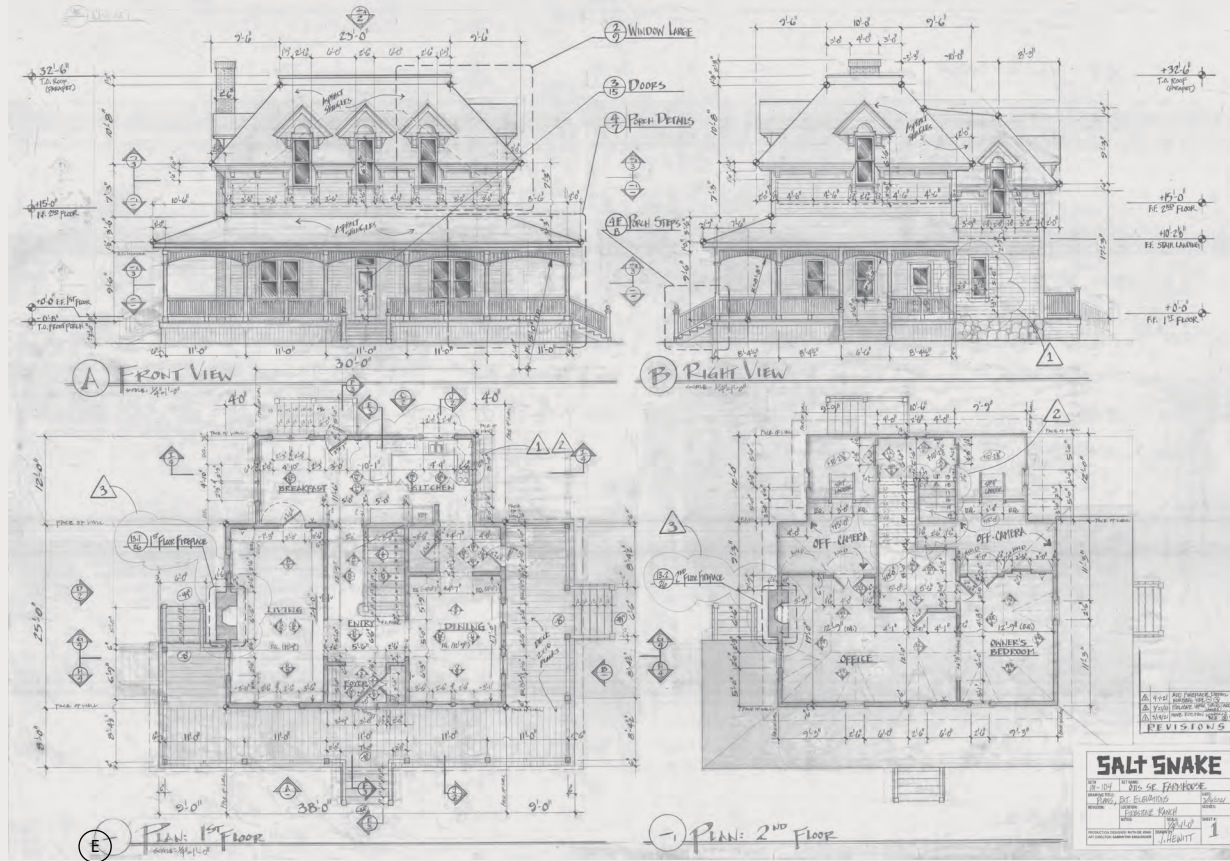
A. THE HAYWOOD RANCH. GROUND UP BUILD ON LOCATION AT FIRESTONE RANCH IN AGUA DULCE. SET PHOTO.

B. HAYWOOD FARMHOUSE. SET PHOTO.

C. HAYWOOD FARMHOUSE COVERED WITH "JEAN JACKET'S" DEBRIS. SET PHOTO.

D. HAYWOOD FARMHOUSE. SET PHOTO.





E. HAYWOOD FARMHOUSE. PLANS AND ELEVATIONS BY JIM HEWITT.

F. HAYWOOD FARMHOUSE. LIVING ROOM. BUILT ON LOCATION IN AGUA DULCE, INT/EXT HAYWOOD FARMHOUSE WAS ENTIRELY PRACTICAL. SET PHOTO.

G. HAYWOOD FARMHOUSE. SECOND-FLOOR BEDROOM/OFFICE OF OTIS SR. SET PHOTO.

That spot overlooked the entire valley below; here, the house would tower above the ranch grounds. I was thrilled at the idea of building the house in addition to the western town, but unsure how that would be received fiscally. We put a pitch together and, with Jordan's full and unwavering support, our dream to build it ALL came true.

My main mission for Haywood was for it to feel genuine. I wanted the audience to assume this house had been a part of the landscape for years. So much of *Nope* is fantastical, but the sets and worlds the characters were inhabiting needed to be so honest that they felt like found locations. I wanted this house to be at least one hundred years old and grounded in the landscape —old, original and iconic.

For the house design itself, I leaned heavily into research from the film's location manager, Justin Duncan, who scouted so many excellent ranches up and down California during early prep. These locations became important tools for Set Designer Jim Hewitt and I in designing our Haywood Ranch; there's nothing better than pulling from the real thing. One location in particular that Justin scouted stuck out to us—The Gilman Ranch house in Banning, California, built in 1897. It reminded



me of a homestead Edward Hopper would have painted, and the triple dormers inspired us.

Jim got to drawing and we came up with the house featured in the film. I could not have asked for a better, more precise construction and paint department, led by construction coordinator Mike Vallarino, general foreman Calvin Mangum and paint foreman Kevin Mahoney. We had to contend with Santa Clarita winds that topped forty mph some days, but the house was so structurally sound, it could support anything the production wanted to do. It was solid, and between the woodwork, moldings, plaster, wallpaper, hardwood floors and aging, it felt as though it had been there for decades.

Gene Serdena, set decorator extraordinaire, brought the house to life with his incredible crew: leadman Grant Samson and buyer Allison Isenberg. They dug deep into the characters and homed in

on all the details, from Otis Sr.'s record collection to the production stills from his past shows hung on his office walls. And beyond the house, they had a vast ranch to dress, including stables, barns, corrals, various outbuildings and Em's trailer.

The crew also built and landscaped the main training arena in front of the hero house, as well as the shed that Otis Jr. (OJ) uses to hide from Jean Jacket. Jordan and Hoyte identified the shed early on as a marker in the valley that would give us scale against the vast landscape, and it became an anchor for a lot of our scenes.

In the basin of the valley, a dirt road led down to an adjoining ranch, where Jupiter's Claim and the Star Lasso Experience Stadium were built. Jupe and Otis Sr. were essentially neighbors; it was a fifteen-minute commute by the main road or a quick five-minute trip via the dirt road between the two properties.

A. HAYWOOD FARMHOUSE, FIRST FLOOR HALLWAY. SET PHOTO.

B. HAYWOOD FARMHOUSE. KITCHEN. SET PHOTO.

C. THE FIELD TOOL SHED. BUILT ON LOCATION IN AGUA DULCE. SET PHOTO.

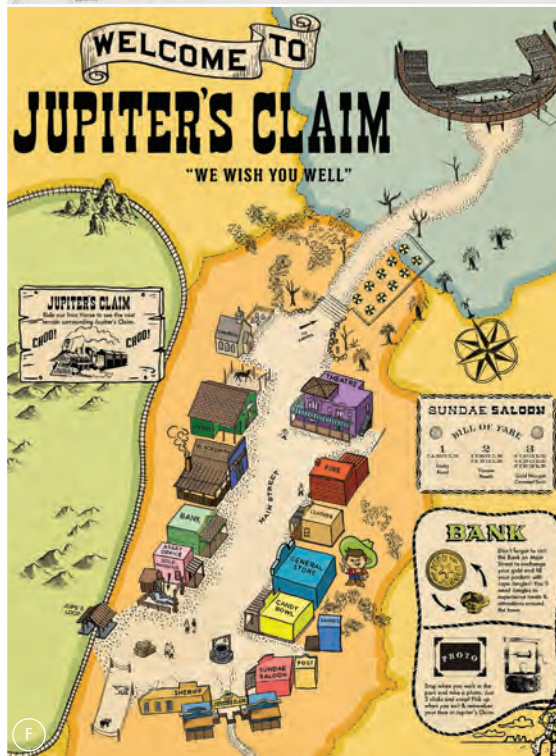
D. HAYWOOD RANCH. STABLES. SET PHOTO.



Jupiter's Claim was a dream to design and create. The Art Department leaned into the depth and richness of Jupe's backstory to develop the park. As a child, Jupe starred in a film franchise called *Kid Sheriff* and now wanted to capitalize on his lingering fame. Essentially ripping off the franchise, he sets out to create his own western-themed frontier town, ensuring that it's off-brand enough so as not to run into any copyright infringements.

The fact that the Jupiter's Claim location and the Haywood Ranch location were adjoining allowed Jordan and Hoyte to explore connectivity between locales, particularly for the penultimate action sequence in which Em rides a motorcycle from the ranch to the Jupiter's Claim Winkin' Well in one shot.

The Art Department started big with the design. Jim Hewitt, Assistant Art Director Jake Cavallo and I staked out our initial dream layout for the town, and I brought Jordan and Hoyte out to walk it. The town felt good, and we thought if anything, it could go bigger.



F. JUPITER'S CLAIM THEME PARK MAP. DESIGNED BY LEAD GRAPHIC DESIGNER HILARY AMENT

G. JUPITER'S CLAIM
SALOON. GRAPHIC
ELEVATION ORIGINAL
GRAPHICS HANDDRAWN BY
LEAD GRAPHIC DESIGNER
HILARY AMENT.





up the greens department and designed wonderful accents throughout the park, bringing in huge live trees to help round out the town layout, as well as giant boulders and desert cacti to give the drive-up entrance an appropriate feel.

Amber and Jupe Park's offices were practically built inside the theater building at Jupiter's Claim; it worked best with the blocking of the scenes and enabled actors to remain all in one place to shoot the scenes from the exterior Main Street into the interiors. This minimized company moves by shooting most everything on the film's built locations, both at Haywood Ranch and Jupiter's Claim.

With such ambitious builds, the production had to carefully structure the schedule. We shot Gordy's home first onstage (a complete build at Warner Bros., leaning into one of their older stages that

was period-appropriate to our '90s TV set), moved over to Fry's Electronics in Burbank and then on up to Haywood Ranch. We shot that out almost entirely before a company move over to Jupiter's Claim down the road. This afforded the crew time to build out Jupiter's Claim while we were shooting Haywood, and Jordan and Hoyte were able to make site visits during lunch or after wrap. It also enabled us to build out over a longer period and keep our construction costs down.

I was so fortunate to have Samantha Englander as the Supervising Art Director; she kept the whole ship running seamlessly and continued to entertain the constant new ideas being generated for the sets.

Winkin' Well at Jupiter's Claim

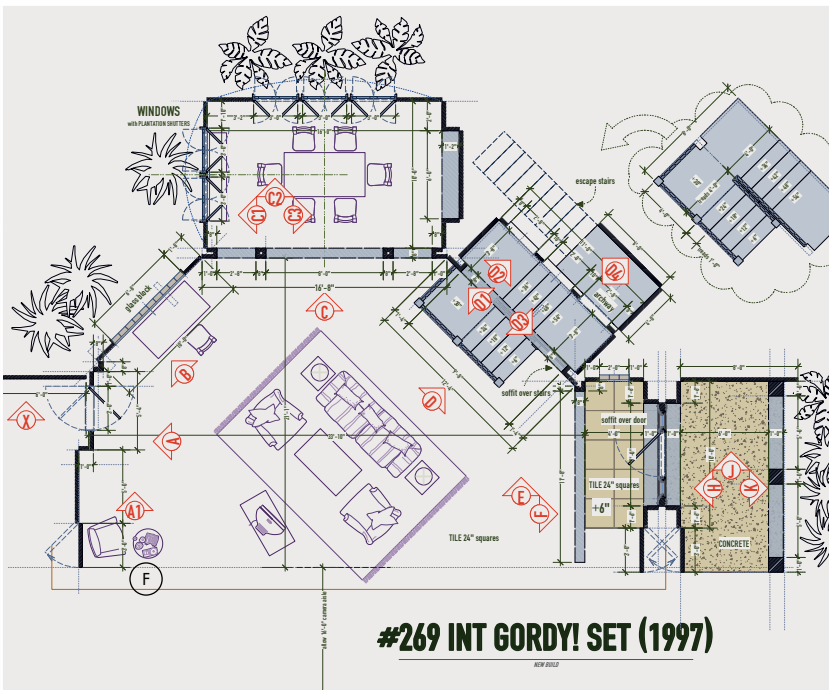
The Art Department aimed to make each building in the park practical if possible, including the Winkin' Well, which became the most important element

D. JUPITER'S CLAIM. AERIAL PHOTO.

E. FRY'S ELECTRONICS. DRESSED ON LOCATION AT THE FORMER FRY'S BURBANK STORE, PRODUCTION STILL.

F. GORDY! SITCOM SET. PLAN. BUILT ON STAGE AT WARNER BROS. STUDIOS.

G. GORDY! SITCOM SET. PRODUCTION STILL.



and heartbeat of Jupiter's Claim. Jordan was keen on this set being fully real—from Em's photo bomb to the final shot it captured of Jean Jacket. We enlisted the crew's fabulous sculptor, David French, to sculpt the well from foam.

Jake Cavallo led the design for the interior camera to be fully functional in conjunction with Scott Fisher, the special effects coordinator, and his team, who executed the fabrication. Per the story, it needed to be a hand-cranked camera with flash bulbs and a large-format camera body, with 8x10 Polaroid film enabling a picture that could be self-developed within minutes. The inspiration behind this set piece harkens back to the movie posters for *Kid Sheriff*.

Star Lasso Experience

The Star Lasso Experience Stadium (Jupe's newest attraction) was also built from the ground up. Constructed entirely out of wood, it was engineered to support a crowd and camera

equipment, as well as withstand the Santa Clarita winds. After playing with several sizes and shapes early on, the Art Department

ultimately landed on a sloped horseshoe shape. We incorporated a deck for Jupe's custom merch and food carts, as well as a guest entrance and animal entrance that could all play to the blocking Jordan needed. Since it was newly built, we leaned into the raw wood look and added the plastic stadium seats and cup holders to give it a real ballpark feel. Asking ourselves the question of how Jupe would pay for such a venture, we gathered that he would utilize his community to help pay for the costs. So we wrapped the stadium's back wall in advertisements, clearing real businesses local to Agua Dulce for these banners.

Jupiter's Claim and the Star Lasso Experience kept the crew's imagination flying throughout the entire prep and shoot. It was so rich with opportunity, and our excitement was overflowing on creating Jupe's Frontier Town. And to top it off, Universal Studios relocated Jupiter's Claim to the backlot tour—so now anyone can visit it and experience what we created. What an honor for us to see this become a reality.

I will be dreaming about collaborations like this for years, as this was a special project that doesn't come about every day. The people, the material, the story, and the world-building made for a uniquely special experience. Thank you to Jordan Peele and Universal Studios for this incredible opportunity to build the world of *Nope*. **ADG**

A. KID SHERIFF POSTER. SET PHOTO.

B. WINKIN' WELL AT JUPITER'S CLAIM. SET PHOTO.

C. STAR LASSO EXPERIENCE ENTRANCE. SET PHOTO.

D. ALIEN MERCHANDISE BOOTH AT THE STAR LASSO EXPERIENCE. SET PHOTO.

E. STAR LASSO EXPERIENCE AUDIENCE SEATING. SET PHOTO.

F. ALIEN ENCOUNTER AT THE STAR LASSO EXPERIENCE. ILLUSTRATION BY JOANNA BUSH.





C



D



E

Ruth De Jong,
Production Designer
Samantha Englander,
Art Director
Jake Cavallo,
Assistant Art Director
Jim Hewitt,
Set Designer
Joanna Bush,
Illustrator
Hilary Ament,
Joel Waldrep,
Graphic Designers
Gene Serdena,
Set Decorator



F

Minx

FEMINISM MEETS SOFT-CORE IN THE '70s

BY JEFFERSON SAGE, PRODUCTION DESIGNER

As designed, there would be several rooms with a more carefully constructed look, but mostly the aesthetics would be “self-realized” by the assorted wayward characters who worked there and were encouraged to “bring things from home, if you want.”



To Begin With ---:

I was first contacted by Ellen Rapoport in early March of 2020 about a new pilot script—would I be interested in reading the script and possibly designing the project? I was reading several projects at the time, but I was intrigued by her description of a 1970s story about a soft-porn publisher in the San Fernando Valley. And, even better, it would be shot in Los Angeles, and one doesn't ignore the chance to work at home these days!

I read the script once, and then again, and realized I was hooked. I was drawn to the broad complement of layered and conflicted characters, a lush 1970s Los Angeles as the backdrop, and a range of potent social issues, all filtered through a wry comedic voice. In particular, the growing "Women's Lib" movement of that time, squarely featured in the DNA of the main character Joyce, seemed a particularly keen issue to revisit in 2022,

in light of the current state of gender politics. A date was set for the following week for a Zoom conference to meet and discuss the project,

Over that weekend, I spent time preparing for the meeting and rereading the script, all the while distracted by the ongoing discussion of a novel coronavirus—something serious they were calling COVID. And indeed, before the weekend was out, the country had closed down, businesses, restaurants, and film and TV production were suspended across the country. People fled the cities and we were "locked down."

That Monday, I received an email from Ellen: Production for her pilot was likewise suspended until further notice, but did I want to Zoom meet anyway, for the heck of it? Yes, I did.

The Pilot ---:

That first meeting went well, and I felt an immediate kinship with Ellen and her team: She was personable and funny, and seemed to listen intently to what I had to say regarding the visual potential of *Minx*. I was offered the Production Designer job, with the proviso that "We have no idea when we might film. Let's stay in touch!" And the summer went by, with the occasional email to say, "Standing by."

By September, production was creeping back to life, and *Minx* was finally on a schedule to prep for eight weeks and shoot for eight days in late November. The COVID protocols dominated every discussion as the pilot crew scouted for our list of locations. At least we were able to lock in a sound choice for the key location of the offices of the Bottom Dollar Productions—a low-rent publishing mill for an empire of "Girlie" magazines, based in the San Fernando Valley. This would be the largest set of the show, and account for four days of the filming schedule. The remaining sets would be on location as well and, slowly, we put together a roster of appropriate locations.

Continued COVID issues pushed prep into a ten-week schedule, with filming now happening in December; with a little luck, we would be able to finish before the holidays. But not so fast. The art and decorating departments were handed a last-



A. INTERIOR BOTTOM DOLLAR PRODUCTIONS OFFICE BULLPEN. SERIES STAGE SET. MAIN AREA OF THE SET SHOWING THE UPPER CLERESTORY WINDOWS. SET PHOTO.



A. BOTTOM DOLLAR BULLPEN. PILOT LOCATION. THE FINISHES, TEXTURES AND WINDOWS WERE AN IMPORTANT RESOURCE FOR THE STAGE SET. SET PHOTO.

B. BOTTOM DOLLAR LOUNGE AREA. PILOT LOCATION. SET PHOTO.

C. BOTTOM DOLLAR PRODUCTIONS MASTER FURNITURE PLAN. PRIMARILY HAND DRAWN BY JEFFERSON SAGE. USED AS A BASIS FOR THE SET DESIGNERS AND OTHER DEPARTMENTS TO DEVELOP THEIR WORK.

minute scramble when that “key location” for the Bottom Dollar was lost in a contract dispute (nothing to do with COVID this time!) and we found ourselves designing/building/dressing an entirely different location for our biggest set, now housed in a downtown brick warehouse, with about two weeks until filming. Finally, with only one day lost to a set COVID outbreak, pilot photography wrapped in early December.

Season One ---:

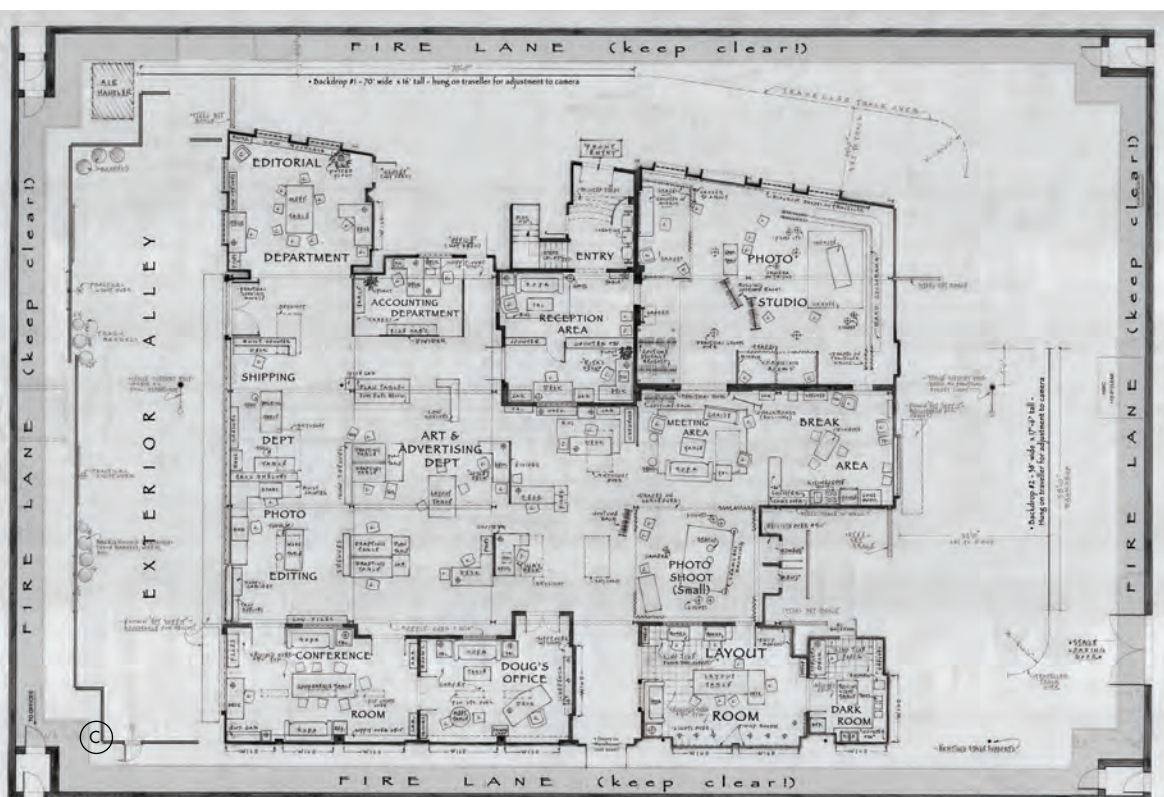
An order for ten episodes came through in April 2021; the pilot had come together well, and the studio wanted a season one. Preproduction began July 5 for an early September shoot date;

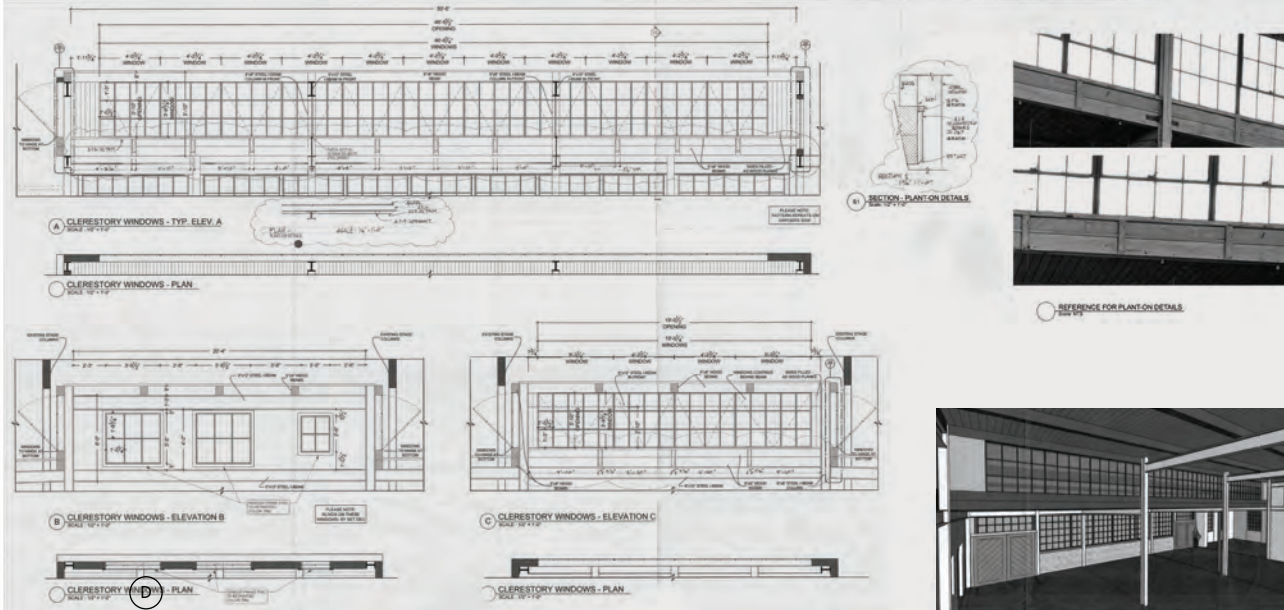
the crew was to design and build two home sets on stage in a converted warehouse facility in Sunland called Tamarack Studios. One set would be a replica of the warehouse/office set developed for the pilot, and the second would be the home apartment for Joyce, the female lead.

My first concerns about the “stages” at Tamarack Studios were realized as the production surveyed the facility and found the ceiling clearance topped out at nineteen feet. By comparison, the location we were to copy had a ceiling height of twenty-eight feet. My plan to “nip-and-tuck” the set to make it fit the stage became radical surgery, and the Art Department struggled to maintain the space

and proportions that would tie the look of our built set to the location shot in the pilot episode. In addition, the writing team asked for more spaces in the set where they could break up the action, divide characters and nurture various sub-plots. First layouts of this main set grew to fill the large stage at Tamarack and, rather quickly, budgets were due, drawings were needed, and the clock was ticking. Or, in other words—the usual.

The location warehouse from the pilot provided a huge head start on a design; it was a grand old brick structure, with large





D. WINDOW ELEVATIONS AND MODEL VIEWS USED TO VISUALIZE CONSTRUCTION. DRAWN BY ALANNA DEMPEWOLFF-BARRETT.

E. BOTTOM DOLLAR CONFERENCE ROOM. SET PHOTO BY KATRINA MARCINOWSKI.

F. BOTTOM DOLLAR EDITORIAL ROOM. SET PHOTO.

G. BOTTOM DOLLAR PHOTO EDITING DESK, SET PHOTO.

factory windows on all sides, and a lofted center area with matching clerestory windows. The old windows had seen many years, and the glass was a lovely mix of patterns, textures, ages and subtle colors; some panes offered clear glass, and some were thoroughly fogged by time. Built on an angled lot, the building itself offered quirky off-angle walls, random rooms, old-brick finishes mingled with worn concrete, and a sense of many lives previously lived. These attributes dovetailed nicely with discussions of the type of space that would house Bottom Dollar Productions for the run of the series.

In contrast to the corporate world of high publishing that the character Joyce dreamed she would find herself in, Bottom Dollar is a down-and-dirty, thrown-together operation staffed with decidedly “marginal” types. As designed, there would be several rooms with a more carefully constructed look, but mostly the aesthetics would be “self-realized” by the assorted wayward characters who worked there and were encouraged to “bring things from home, if you want.” This was an important decorating choice, as it meant that the period 1970s design for the space would actually range from the 1950s to the 1970s, with the chance for lots of found and mismatched items. Following the lead of the pilot set decorator Jennifer Gentile, series set decorator Doug Mowat would take this concept and run with it, producing a marvelous, chaotic look that was fun, a bit sad, and perfectly appropriate to our show.





A. BOTTOM DOLLAR SECTION AND MODEL VIEWS. DETAIL OF A SKETCHUP LAYOUT DRAWING BY XI CHEN CHOU.

B. BOTTOM DOLLAR BULLPEN-SHIPING AREA. THE WINDOWS LOOK OUT ONTO A DIMENSIONAL EXTERIOR FACADE. SET PHOTO.

Another advantage to copying this warehouse was that it gave the Art Department a virtual library of research for the set. Much of our task thus became to find the best application of the textures, colors, materials and details the space offered. We were not slavish about making an exact copy in our approach; rather, we were after an authentic interpretation of the space using the building's own visual language (turned, of course, to the needs of filming a TV show).

Several practical problems presented themselves during the initial design of the set for Bottom Dollar Productions. As mentioned, the stage size was a challenge. Besides the issue regarding available space (not enough and too short!), the existing rigging system was an ad hoc collection of mismatched pipes and set points of dubious provenance—a distinctly unhealthy menu of

rigging choices. Grips and riggers got to work to make sense out of the chaos.

Tied to the stage space conundrum was the question of how to interpret the factory windows that were a dominant feature of the original warehouse location. Besides the obvious appeal of the look, the windows offered a banquet of choices in controlling lighting and mood for the action (crucial elements in a home set that might have to live through five or six seasons!). And I was committed to seeing out of these windows as much as possible, which meant that a serious chunk of the precious stage footprint was going to be devoted to space for the backdrops and backing walls that would sell that sense of depth. So, saying goodbye to notions of “saving a little corner” for other uses, the Art Department designed the set to completely fill the large stage at Tamarack. A much



smaller swing stage would have to carry the burden of any added stage builds.

Thus continued the push-and-pull of the Art Department fitting the set into the stage. We decided to maximize our set height by building right to the existing ceiling of the stage with the raised two-story area of the set; the clerestory windows at that level could be lit from the sides if we made the lower set ceiling a supported working platform to provide access for electrics. This developed into the entire set being a self-supporting structure that would stand on the deck, rather than being hung or supported by the dubious stage grid. The stage itself would mostly be a roof over the set.

Working backward, the design team studied the proportions of the original warehouse and downsized them to maintain the relationships of windows to floor, windows to doors to ceilings, and so forth. The exterior spaces were designed with drops hung to the fire lane to maximize the distance between the set and drop. One exterior wall was designed as a full warehouse facade, with detailed, dimensional features and practical building lights to allow for lighting that would coordinate with the interior set.

Several weeks later, with the stage stripped of unnecessary pipes and rigging and leftover scenery, and assorted repairs completed, construction began in earnest as the first steel girders and beams were stood upright and welded in place. Almost immediately, set dressers were in the space, layering in electrical conduit, water pipes, meters, gauges, fire prevention sprinklers, overhead lighting and the like. The race was on to finish the set for Day One of filming, about three weeks away.

Not unexpectedly, the glass for the factory windows was a huge effort. To mimic the look of the patchwork textures of glass (some dating back to the 1920s, and some cracked and broken), the crew put together an order mixing six different obscure glass choices. It was important to keep the panes at the top of the windows fully obscure to protect views off the top of the



exterior set backings. But approaching the bottom of the windows, I wanted the glass to be almost transparent, so the camera could see out and realize the sense of depth outside the set. This required a careful calibration as to which type of glass went where. A team of glaziers worked to install over five hundred sixty-five unique panes of glass referring to drawings that oriented each piece according to the scheme. Then, working on the heels of the glaziers, set painters went to work to build up the layers of alternating pale color and years-deep “grime.”

Doug's Office ---:

As the boss of the company, Doug needed a more upscale office with a more carefully constructed look. Most of the groundwork for the Bottom Dollar set was laid by the set decorator for the pilot, Jennifer Gentile; series Decorator Doug Mowat was later able to quickly rough in just about every space with similar choices, and then carry on to fine-tune the details. Doug's office is a masculine space, dominated by a power desk to one side. A colorful, but faded, photo mural of a mountain scene dresses the wall behind the desk (this is a leftover from a previous business that Doug has neglected to remove). The colors are dark, with a medium-toned wood paneling accent, to create a sense of separation and intimacy, in contrast to the wide-open and well-lit ambience of the bullpen just outside.

C. DOUG'S OFFICE
AT BOTTOM DOLLAR
PRODUCTIONS.
DECORATED IN MASCULINE
1970S BROWN AND
OLIVE BY JENNIFER GENTILE
(PILOT) AND DOUG MOWAT
(SERIES). SET PHOTO BY
KATRINA MARCINOWSKI.

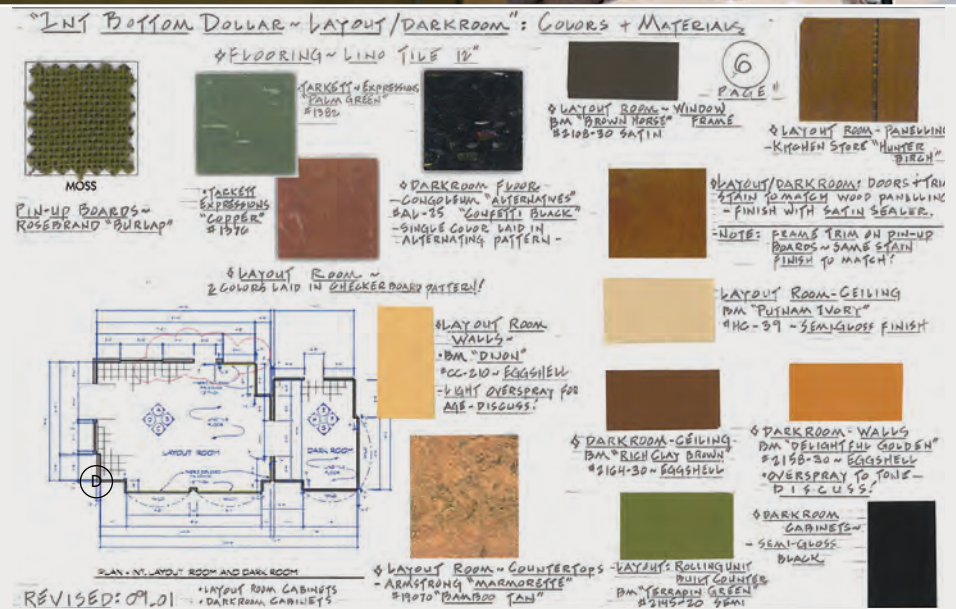


Photo Studio ---:

The business of the company is to churn out product in the form of girlie magazines, and it was a point to constantly feature this activity in the background. Besides keeping a standing order of lighting and camera equipment, costumes and props for extras to shift around, the photo studio—a separate room with a standing hard cyc, drapes and lights—was redressed for every episode with a new themed photo shoot. An important set dressing element was the cadre of background models lounging about in frisky attire while waiting for their time in front of the lens. An upper storage loft held the cast-offs of numerous shoots in the form of old costumes, props, furniture pieces, odd sculptural elements and such. Sometimes photo shoots were staged in other parts of the office and bullpen as well—this to emphasize the relentless schedule they worked under to produce twelve different magazines a month.

Layout Room ---:

This area featured assorted workstations to complete or adjust layouts and another large work table dominating the center of the room. The walls were devoted to pin-up boards for times when completed layouts for an issue could be displayed for final approval. The hectic and stressful production of the first issue of *Minx* (episode one hundred three) is thus displayed in forty-five layout pages, with articles, photos, and ads for final approval by the boss Doug. This was a huge and time-consuming project for the art, decorating and prop departments. The dedicated photo darkroom adjacent featured an on-site lab for processing all the negatives and printing from the numerous photo shoots that were going on. Unlike most of the rest of the office, where the look was haphazard and cobbled together, the decor of this room was more self-consciously designed and purposeful—and more directly period-specific—for a hint of the professional aspect of their publishing operation. This was their product going out the door to be printed and sold, and the room needed to reflect that. If visitors came to the office, this room would represent their business.



Graphics ----:

Led by Karen Sori (pilot) and Carolyn Baumert (series), the graphics department of *Minx* faced a daunting task. Besides the usual demands of a period show (signage, advertising, menus and cards, small paperwork, vehicles and police cars, etc.) there was the additional task of producing the constantly changing background graphics of an office that is in the business of magazine graphics! Half-completed photo layouts and advertising sheets were forever being dressed into workstations and desk boards, with a goal of never seeing the same thing twice. If the camera wandered into the layout room, it needed to see another magazine presentation on the wall, to fill the otherwise blank spaces. Just acquiring enough cleared photography for these pages was a demanding proposition. The group, usually three designers but sometimes only two, performed admirably to keep on top of the work and meet deadlines that turned over every six days.

A. BOTTOM DOLLAR PHOTO STUDIO. CHANGING PROPS, DRESSING AND BACKGROUNDS ACCOMMODATE THE PHOTO SHOTS. SET PHOTO.

B. BOTTOM DOLLAR LAYOUT ROOM. WHERE THE MAGAZINE PAGES ARE CREATED AND DISPLAYED. THE PHOTO DARKROOM IS SEEN BEHIND. SET PHOTO.

C. JOYCE IN THE LAYOUT ROOM WITH MOCK-UPS OF HER FIRST ISSUE. PRODUCTION STILL BY KATRINA MARCINOWSKI.

D. COLOR BOARD FOR THE LAYOUT ROOM AND DARKROOM BY JEFFERSON SAGE. TYPICAL OF THE METHOD USED TO DETAIL THE COLORS AND TEXTURES OF EACH AREA.

E. BOTTOM DOLLAR DRESSING ROOM. SET PHOTO.

F. BOTTOM DOLLAR LOUNGE AREA. SET PHOTO.

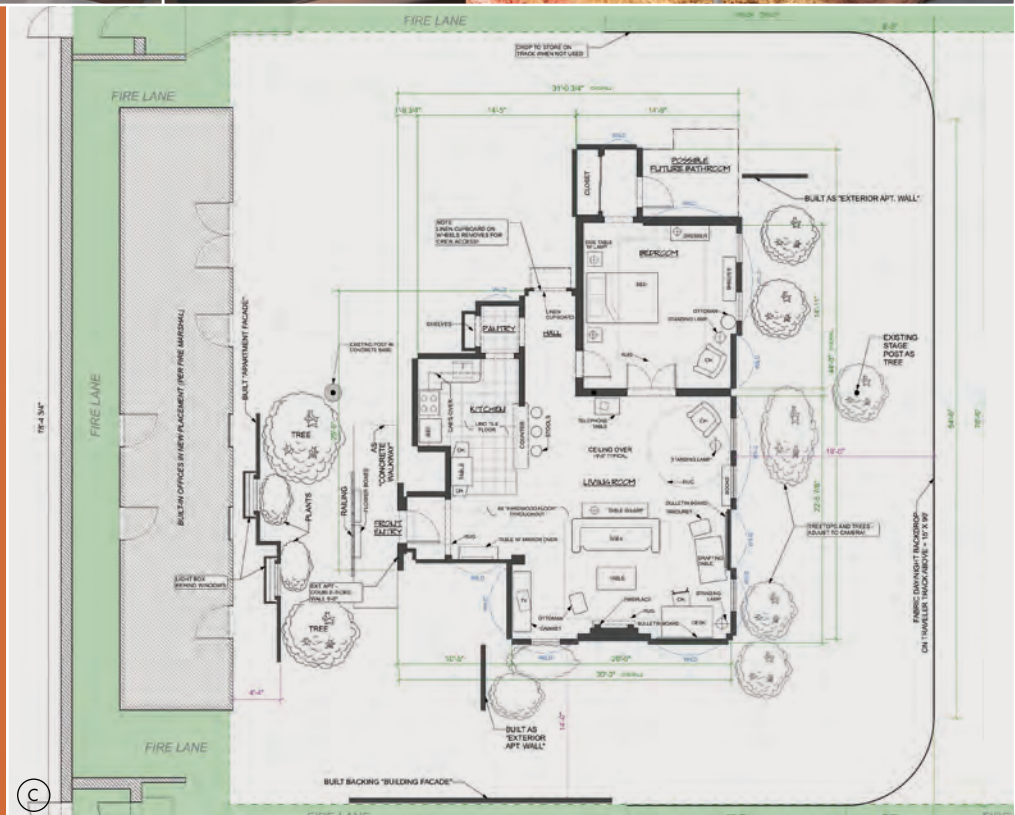
G. MAGAZINE COVER DISPLAY. FRAMED COVERS CREATED FOR THE PILOT BY GRAPHIC ARTIST KAREN SORI. SET PHOTO BY KATRINA MARCINOWSKI

H. BULLPEN DESK WITH IN-PROCESS GRAPHICS FOR THE ASSORTED MAGAZINES. SET PHOTO.





Jefferson Sage,
 Production Designer
 Christina Kim,
 Art Director
 Chris Dexter,
 Assistant Art Director
 Gordon Stotz, Rick Nickol, Xi Chen Chou,
 Alanna Dempewolff-Barrett,
 Dawn Snyder (Pilot),
 Rhea Rebbe (Pilot),
 Set Designers
 Carolyn Baumert, Karen Sori,
 Dorothy Street, Robin McCarthy (Pilot),
 Graphic Artists
 Doug Mowat,
 Jennifer Gentile (Pilot),
 Set Decorators





Joyce's Apartment ---:

The home set for the main character Joyce was planned as a conventional build on a swing stage, again copying a successful location space used in the pilot. I was drawn to an older architectural style for this apartment, with built-in cabinets, older molding styles and a decorative fireplace. It is intentionally NOT the current trendy style in 1970s apartment living, in keeping with Joyce's driven ambition to work in the magazine trade, to the neglect of her own comfort and lifestyle. She is ambitious, obsessive, and has been thinking about magazines her whole life. Her space is mostly practical, furnished with hand-me-downs, and given over to her work life. The trick was to keep it from being too charming and cute; the apartment is clean and functional, but otherwise neglected. The landlord almost had more to do with the look of the place than she did.

Consequently, the set colors were kept in a warm neutral range, with the idea that set decorating choices would provide the punchier color and detail. Windows on two sides of the set provide ample options for lighting, with views out to greens and backings. In this case, the series' DP Jason Oldak agreed to let us put in a fixed hard ceiling with several hinged panels for added lighting options when necessary. This gave the option of seeing the top of the box that Joyce lives in.

Set decorator Jennifer Gentile (pilot) again pointed the way for the look of this set established during the pilot. Set decorator Doug Mowat (series) provided many finishing touches for the look of this permanent "home" set, down to the stacks of contemporary feminist books that Joyce was well acquainted with. **ADG**

A. A VIEW OF THE KITCHEN AREA FROM THE PILOT EPISODE. SET PHOTO.

B. KITCHEN AREA. SERIES STAGE SET. ADAPTABLE AREA USED FOR INFORMAL MEETINGS AND RANDOM ACTIVITIES SET PHOTO.

C. JOYCE'S APARTMENT. FURNITURE PLAN DRAWN BY XI CHEN CHOU.

D. JOYCE'S BEDROOM. SET PHOTO.

E. JOYCE'S KITCHEN. SET PHOTO.

F. JOYCE'S APARTMENT LIVING ROOM. STAGE SET BASED ON THE PILOT LOCATION. SET PHOTO.

G. THIS SET STILL SHOWS JOYCE HARD AT WORK IN HER APARTMENT WRITING COPY FOR MINX. THE DECOR OF THE SPACE SHOWS HER OBSESSIVE COMMITMENT TO HER DREAM OF ONE DAY EDITING A MAGAZINE FOR THE NASCENT FEMINIST MOVEMENT OF THE EARLY 1970S. PHOTO BY KATRINA MARCINOWSKI.





Creating 1980s Miami in Puerto Rico

THE GORDITA CHRONICLES

BY AMY LEE WHEELER, PRODUCTION DESIGNER

The dogs and I were four miles into a forest hike when my phone vibrated. The call to design a series in Puerto Rico stopped me, but it was the true story of a chubby, willful Dominican immigrant growing up in 1980s Miami that turned me around. I couldn't wait to read Claudia Forestieri's take on being the new kid, not just in town, but in America. There are countless unique voices and perspectives rarely seen on television, so any opportunity to bring a new slice of the world to life gets my complete attention. What I didn't expect was for Cucu and the Castelli's to

resonate like those iconic '80s TV families of my childhood. Their sarcastic humor and no-frills lifestyle were so relatable and loveable while their bond was goal worthy. This wasn't just another comedy series. *Gordita Chronicles* had something magical from the first page. And who doesn't want to sign up for a location with sandy beaches and piña coladas?

That afternoon I jotted down ideas and pulled references that reflected not only the family's pride and intelligence, but also the Hialeah



neighborhood in Miami where Forestieri grew up. I knew all about being a chubby girl in the '80s and even shared a bedroom with my popular older sister, but understanding the cultural shifts this family faced between the Dominican Republic and Miami was crucial to authenticity.

In 1985, I couldn't hide my thick Oklahoma accent when my family moved, or my tall, round build, or that bad perm, so I learned to use humor to deflect attention. The thing I loved about this series was that Cucu is fearless and avoids nothing. She's

bursting with an envious curiosity and excitement while her sister Emilia is focused on popularity and boys. The series examines the sacrifices of immigration and judgment that sometimes comes from family members back home who don't understand, but it also focuses on common adolescent hurdles like making new friends, fitting in, and managing hormone changes and crushes. There are also some great situations where Adela and Victor Castelli have to adjust their own expectations, because settling into a new life—a new culture—is hard for everyone.

A. APARTMENT COURTYARD. SET PHOTO BY LAURA MAGRUDER.

B. CUCU IN THE COURTYARD. PRODUCTION STILL BY LAURA MAGRUDER.

C. CASTELLI APARTMENT AND COURTYARD. DIRECTOR'S PLAN DRAWN IN VECTORWORKS BY MARCO MIEHE AND JOE PEW.

I had to keep that in mind when I landed in San Juan. It doesn't matter that it's an American territory, Puerto Rico has its own spark and vibe. There is a language barrier even if you think you speak Spanish and a learning curve to everything. I couldn't foresee the bumps ahead but learned to let go of the way things are "usually" done and mastered alternatives.

Shooting on an island always requires patience and planning, but designing a period series on a partially bilingual island in a pandemic during hurricane season was an endless obstacle course of challenges that delivered more adventure than I initially promised Art Director Joe Pew and set decorator Kaitlynn Wood. From supply chain hiccups and crew shortages to moisture issues, power outages, and wicked mosquitoes, *Gordita* became a quest that bonded the LA and local crews together deeply.

This was the second project I've designed based on someone's real life, and while it's instinctual to skim through childhood photos and recreate original spaces, it's not always the best thing for an audience or the camera. Since this wasn't a biopic, I knew we'd be able to take liberties with the look and tell the story thematically.

I met Claudia and executive producer Brigitte Muñoz-Liebowitz over Zoom, where we immediately agreed the humor was in the dialog and action, not the design. *Gordita* needed to be grounded in a reality without distracting colors or over-the-top style. I referenced the simplicity and "ordinary-ness" of iconic '80s films by John Hughes and Chris Columbus but noted the lack of diversity in most of those suburbs. Miami

simmered with Latin culture and an art deco past that had become gritty and textured. I didn't want to shy away from that less glamorous side of the era, even in a comedy.

We discussed the Castelli's adjusting to life in a one-bathroom apartment verses their Dominican home with housekeepers and an abundance of space, then pinpointed the few items that would have made the trip to Miami. Most of their furniture would be thrifty purchases done locally while some art and a record player could be cherished pieces they've had for years. This created a blend of eras which I loved. Rarely do people live in a time capsule where everything was made within a short span of time, so mixing styles built realistic layers.

It's tricky coming onto a series where the pilot was done by another crew, especially this one shot entirely at Los Angeles locations. Fortunately, the opening storyline focused on the family landing in a motel, so their home interior was never established. I wanted to stay true to Cabot McMullen's look, but we were in a completely different world. The debate over how much of the pilot to match became focused on just making sure the audience wasn't jarred when they binge-watch the show.

Puerto Rico doesn't have courtyard apartment complexes or outdoor school cafeterias and the mountains across the island don't resemble Miami's flat terrain. However, San Juan does have an abundance of lush tropical greens and a mixture of mid-century and 1980s architecture that provided a good backdrop. After driving around with location manager Vivian Rebella, it was clear the school would be the biggest change from the pilot. I wanted to incorporate a few elements from the LA pilot's

A. FRONT ENTRANCE OF OUR SCHOOL LOCATION —COLEGIO SAN IGNACIO DE LOYOLA, SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO, ARCHITECT HENRY KLUMB. SET PHOTO.

B. SCHOOL LOCATION. SET PHOTO.

C. SET CONCEPTS FOR SCHOOL HALLWAY B AND CLASSROOM ONE. SKETCHUP MODEL BY AMY LEE WHEELER.

D. SCHOOL CAFETERIA SET CONCEPT. MODELED IN SKETCHUP BY AMY LEE WHEELER IN A HOTEL ROOM DURING A TROPICAL STORM.

E. SCHOOL CAFETERIA. GREENS PLAN. VECTORWORKS DRAWING BY AMY LEE WHEELER.

F. CLASSROOM ONE STAGE SET. SET PHOTO.



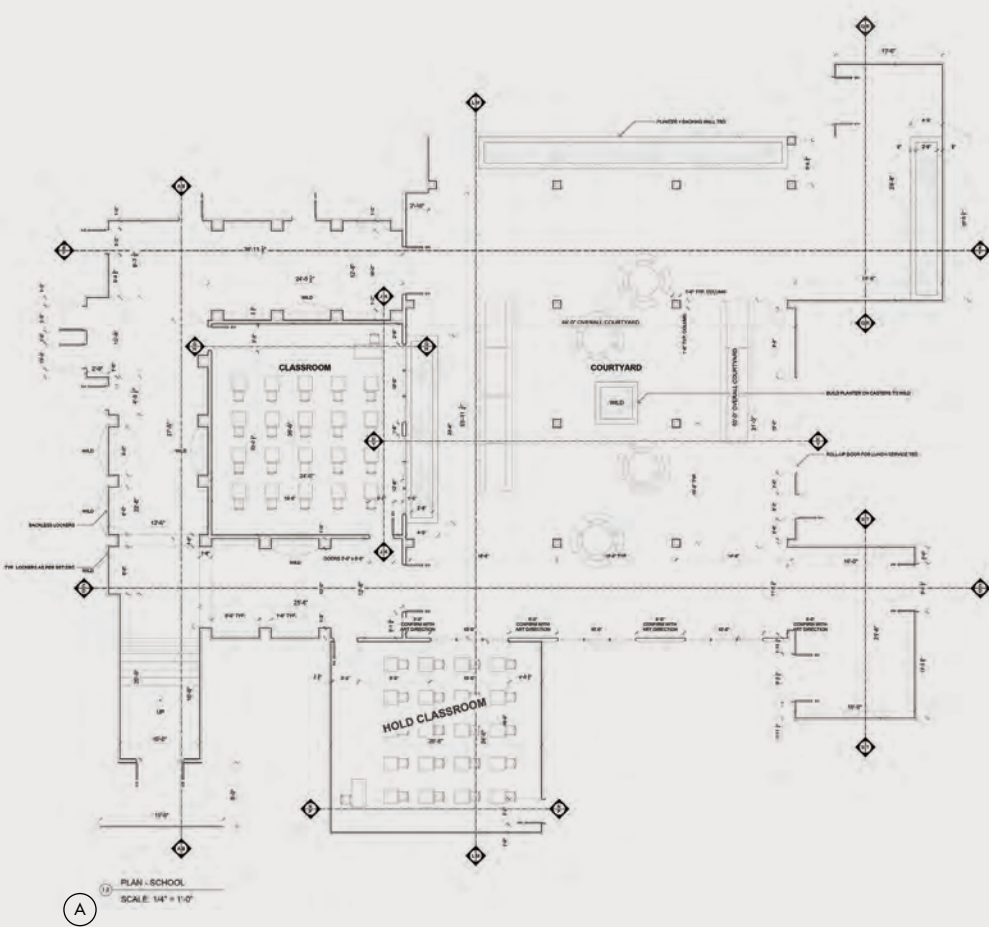
cafeteria, like a red brick wall and the round yellow columns, but red brick was rare in Miami, so it had to be minimal. Even more rare was finding red brick in San Juan.

The school set needed the largest footprint and would be built on the far end of the warehouse for various reasons, so it had to be designed first. Despite only having a handful of scenes to shoot at a real location, finding the place the production would shoot was critical to starting the layout. I needed some connective tissue. Vivian took me to the most beautiful location I'd seen on the island, a private grammar school designed by German architect Henry Klumb (although they've kept that fact a bit of a secret so dorky tourists like me don't wander the grounds). I knew it was perfect immediately. It had all the outdoor walkways and lush grounds you'd find in Miami under expansive ceilings that protect from the rain. The campus had layers that fit what I wanted to do for the set, and although a school does not need to be stunning, it doesn't hurt.

The producers liked the depth of the "outdoor" cafeteria used in the pilot, so my challenge was making the series' version look realistic on stage. To me, that meant not just surrounding an open set with flat backings.

Puerto Rico is no stranger to production, but *Gordita Chronicles* was only the third union television series to land on the island, just on the heels of Sony's first *Fantasy Island* season. The majority of work there for decades has been film, usually large studio pictures with lots of action and stunts. In fact, a Gerard Butler movie called *The Plane* was there prepping when I landed, which meant finding local crew was difficult. I mean, really...finding crew anywhere in the world at that moment was tricky. Productions were popping up hourly with competitive wages that made enticing people, even to the Caribbean, a challenge. When it became clear we'd have to bring more crew than anticipated, the logistics of coordinating that ate into precious prep time. I could almost hear the production countdown ticking. Add in a mild tropical storm and some delays in getting our offices ready and the pressure mounted.





A. SCHOOL INTERIOR AND COURTYARD. FLOOR PLAN DRAWN IN VECTORWORKS BY CHEYENNE BELL.

B. CUCU IN THE CLASSROOM. PRODUCTION STILL BY LAURA MAGRUDER.

C. CUCU IN THE CAFETERIA. PRODUCTION STILL BY LAURA MAGRUDER.

D. CASTELLI APARTMENT. SKETCHUP CONCEPT MODEL BY AMY LEE WHEELER.

E. CASTELLI APARTMENT KITCHEN. SET PHOTO.

F. CASTELLI APARTMENT LIVING ROOM. SET PHOTO.

G. RESEARCH PHOTO OF A HIALEAH, MIAMI APARTMENT COMPLEX.

H. CASTELLI APARTMENT COURTYARD. ANNOTATED SKETCHUP MODEL BY AMY LEE WHEELER.

So, I did the only thing I could do...get to work. I set up my desktop computer in the hotel room as soon as it arrived via FedEx and started modeling. My process always starts with a crude SketchUp model, developed from different angles with basic paint colors, textures, greens and furniture. I needed a device for conversations with producers in Los Angeles to discuss the proportion and scale of our Miami Palms Junior High set.

I prefer dimensional scenery to backings when possible, so placing the classrooms and “exterior” hallways around the cafeteria made sense. I also had concerns about the number of appropriate backings we could reliably get to the island given availability and worldwide shipping delays. But as great as windows and doors are for depth and background action, we still needed to feel like the school grounds and daylight were all around. We needed sunlight and thick, rich greens.

I reached out to DP Sonnel Velazquez, hoping the naturalistic style I’d seen in his previous film work meant he was a daring collaborator. All designers know cinematographers who hate hard ceilings or white surfaces, two prevalent characteristics

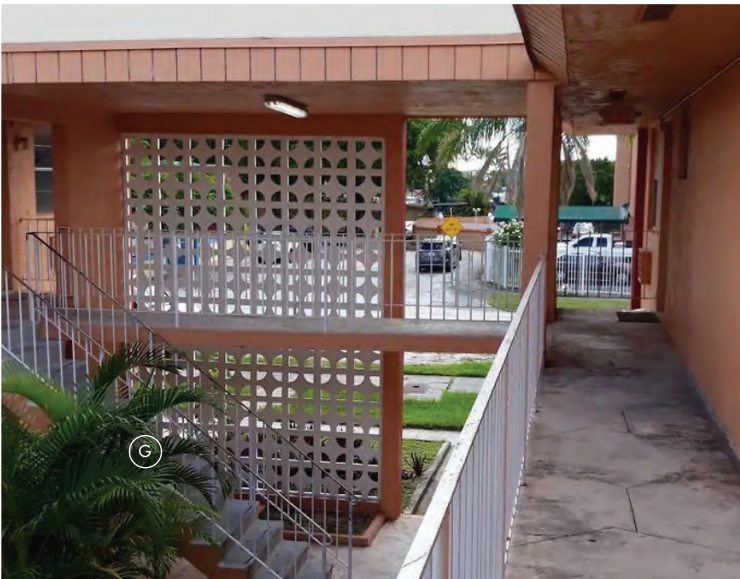
at the lovely school location. But when I proposed popcorn ceilings in the apartment and a plastered canopy over the cafeteria, he welcomed it. My shoulders sank as I continued to offer an abundance of practical lighting and whatever else he needed to make his job easier, but now that I really know him and his gaffer, Tyson Cintron, it’s clear I didn’t need to “bribe” anyone with lights. Sonnel’s focus was always the same as mine. Realism. Putting a lid on the sets grounded the space and dictated scale in a way that erased the sound stage feel.

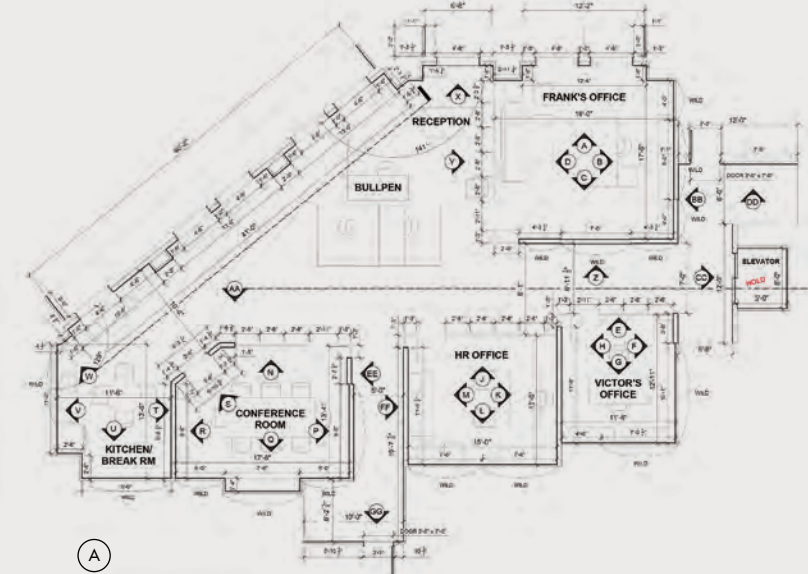
I added a large round opening in the center of the cafeteria for live palm trees, mimicking the school location’s entrance, then pitched the idea of a small amphitheater with grass steps to producers. It created a multi-use space and reinforced the landscape beyond, also giving a middle ground between the single backing and the lunch tables. Above planters, I opened three other sections of the canopy, so Sonnel could create shafts of sunlight, then worked with the greensman, David Joe, to install large grow lights so he wouldn’t have to pull the palm trees outside daily for light.

An early model was uploaded to Set Designer Cheyenne Bell so she could work out any odd proportions or off-center elements before I shifted to designing the apartment. I like building a trust with my team to let their creative expertise shine instead of micromanaging them. Art Director Joe Pew poured over ceiling layouts and details to keep construction moving and I focused on the next meeting—the next hurdle—which was convincing producers that a two-story apartment courtyard needed to be built on stage.

The courtyard was the only element of the Castelli's new home established in the pilot and it was so prominent in the beautiful closing scene that we had to stay true to its layout. Since finding a location was not an option, I had to figure out how to afford the build and fit it on stage. Shrinking the scale of the LA location by approximately ten percent and doing a bit of forced perspective on the second floor did the trick. It not only provided a great backdrop outside the apartment windows and front door, but the production was also able to shoot entire scenes out there convincingly. I think the heavily textured and aged stucco we used also made it feel like Hialeah.

Inside, I added a few funky details like the mid-century lightbox over the bar, '70s linoleum floors, and an old built-in at the dining area to convey the age of the building, but gave a classic '80s "landlord upgrade" to the apartment with oak-trimmed cabinets, yellow laminate countertops and sea-foam green carpet. The popcorn ceilings and muted wallpapers gave texture but never fought for attention. Nothing feels more '80s than tons of houseplants, so the crew splayed trailing vines all over and layered in tropical prints to reflect a slight Caribbean vibe.





A. STARBOARD HQ.
VECTORWORKS PLAN BY
CHEYENNE BELL.

B. STARBOARD HQ.
BULLPEN. SET PHOTO.

C. STARBOARD HQ.
RECEPTION. SET PHOTO.

D. STARBOARD HQ.
FRANKS'S OFFICE. SET
PHOTO.

E. STARBOARD HQ. CEMENT
TEXTURE SAMPLE BY
PLASTERER SCOTT VON FELDT.

F. HALLOWEEN STREET.
SET PHOTO BY LAURA
MAGRUDER.

G. DRESSED GROCERY STORE
LOCATION. SET PHOTO.

H. FOOD COURT. DRESSED
LOCATION. SET PHOTO.

Victor Castelli's promotion to Latin American Marketing Director was the whole premise for the family move to Miami. The scripts required his headquarters to include an executive office, two smaller offices, a bullpen, a conference room, an elevator and a break area. I used Eastern Airlines, the company where Claudia's father really worked, as inspiration for Starboard Headquarters, which meant placing them in a skyscraper above Miami's commercial waterfront. An expansive wall of windows required a very long backing that would usually dictate putting the set above the stage floor, but the cost of the unexpected apartment courtyard build and a very limited access to wood by that point meant something had to go. The set had to stand on the concrete floor.

Luckily, Eastern Airlines had an affinity for brutalist architecture and was known for their buildings around the world. The style allowed me to solve the stage floor problem by placing the

windows into deep concrete wells that masked the floor and backing edges. Plaster foreman Scott Von Feldt experimented with various sized aggregates to get the proper scale, then developed a method of hand-cutting grooves into concrete slabs to create the fluted and hammered style I wanted. We had a blast trying several methods that in the end looked great.

The Starboard set came with another set of issues, too. The floor-to-ceiling glass. There were no ovens on the island large enough to temper the lengths needed, so all thirty-eight panels had to be sent to Miami to be tempered. Once they returned, the construction team had to design a system for gimbaling them, since the metal channels commonly used weren't available. They ended up modifying a type of metal door casing found in a warehouse on the other side of the island and tapping pins to the tops and bottoms that popped directly into the floor. It required some



E



F



G



H

extensive modifications and leveling, prompting adjustments right up until the last minute, but eventually, we all learned to pivot like those slabs and think outside the box.

Despite the rolling power outages that came during the last week of prep (which forced the final dressing and dust-aging to be done with just a few portable work lights), I'm grateful for the adventure and the amazing, talented team crazy enough to come share it. We ended up building several swing sets through the eight episodes, but it was on location where we went big once the permanent sets were done. The Halloween episode mid-season required decorating three separate trick-or-treat neighborhoods, a teen house party, a haunted house and the series' "villain" (and head of the Bubblegum girls' clique) Cari's Bedroom. Then there was the coupon episode in a grocery store, and the finale with a beauty pageant in a shopping mall food court. Bring on the Orange

Julius, Sbarro Pizza, and hundreds of products to fill grocery aisles.

There were no "bottle" episodes on this one, but that's what made each week so exciting and why I think audiences have fallen in love with the show all summer. The scripts were funny and smart. The actors delightful. The sets beautiful. And on the weekends...we got those sandy beaches, piña coladas and warm Puerto Rican smiles.

What more could you want? **ADG**

Amy Lee Wheeler,
Production Designer
Joe Pew,
Art Director
Cheyenne A. Bell,
Marco Miehle,
Set Designers
Sharon Weaver,
Graphic Artist
Kaitlynn Wood,
Set Decorator





“When You Wish Upon a Star”

DESIGNING CONCEPT GRAPHICS FOR DISNEY'S *PINOCCHIO*

BY KAREN TENEYCK, GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Written by Carlo Collodi in 1883, *The Adventures of Pinocchio* tells the story of Geppetto, a woodworker and toy maker, who longs for a son. Directed by Robert Zemeckis, the story is set in Collodi's native land—Italy. Produced by Disney, the film was designed by Stefan Dechant and Doug Chiang, with set decoration by Tina Jones and supervising art direction by Doug Meerdink.

As a Graphic Designer, there's a lot to be said for not having to worry about gravity. No worrying about a sign falling off a wall that can't be screwed into at the location, no wet street flyers with ink running down the page due to those pesky raindrops falling from the sky, and no teetering ladders while trying to measure a street sign above a busy avenue. When designing for animation, it's pure inventiveness and creativity in a totally imagined world with almost no physical limitations. One can make elaborate signs with many whimsical moving parts, things that float in the air by themselves, and things that characters

can walk right through if the script calls for it. The freedom of it is very liberating for a Graphic Designer who works in storytelling—nothing in the graphic world would need to be produced by a vendor.

Pinocchio was the first film I worked on after COVID shutdown in-person work in 2020, and it required everyone to work from their home bunkers. Supervising Art Director Doug Meerdink contacted me to create some posters and newspapers for the street scene that opens the movie as Jiminy Cricket introduces the characters. Meerdink explained



that the film would have a live-action Geppetto (Hanks), but the whole environment and all the other characters would be motion-captured and animated. The LA-based Art Department would develop the ideas and computer environments, and then the project would move to England for the shoot.

To create the sets, the scenery would be “built” in Unreal, the 3D virtual reality gaming engine, where a highly rendered environment can be moved around on actual video screens during filming. Unreal also allows the collaborators to change textures and colors in real-time while filming. Naturally, this gives the director maximum control over the set and composition of the film frame. My job would be to provide the graphic “assets” that the animation team could plug in once the environments were finalized. Doug Chiang would be designing Pleasure Island, and Stefan Dechant would design all the other environments, including Geppetto’s hometown of Collodi.

Poster Street—The Opening of the Film

I started working with Dechant on the “Poster Street” set. In the film, Jiminy Cricket walks down a side street on his way to his assignment as guardian of the newly created Pinocchio. As he passes a wall, we see various ephemera that hint at the action and characters to come. Three groups of graphics would need to be done—wanted posters for the bad guys, tabloid newspapers that introduce the audience to the character of Monstro, and a promotional poster for The Great Stromboli, the marionette impresario.

I first tackled the Monstro tabloid paper. This lets viewers know that a huge, monstrous whale has been causing havoc in the sea near town—it has wrecked many ships and eaten many people. The tabloid foreshadows Pinocchio and Geppetto being swallowed by the beast near the end of the movie. To create the tabloid, I wrote the text and dipped into my large collection of 19th century royalty-free artwork and some of the one hundred

A. GEPPETTO’S SHOP. STILL FROM THE FILM.

B. GEPPETTO’S TOY SHOP. PRELIMINARY IDEA FOR THE ESTABLISHING SIGN.

C. GEPPETTO’S TOY SHOP. FINAL VERSION OF THE ESTABLISHING SIGN.

A. A NEWSPAPER
PLASTERED TO THE WALL IN
THE OPENING SEQUENCE
WHERE JIMINY CRICKET
INTRODUCES US TO THE
TOWN OF COLLODI,
FEATURING MONSTRO,
A GIANT WHALE-LIKE
SEA CREATURE WHICH IS
REEKING HAVOC IN THE
SEASIDE TOWN.

B. WANTED POSTER
FOR CHARACTERS THAT
PINOCCHIO MEETS IN
THIS ADVENTURE 'ON THE
ROAD.'

fifty custom fonts that I have designed over the course of my career. These resources helped a lot with the clearance department—because I designed the fonts myself, we were able to avoid the typeface copyright issues that studios are now so overly intent on honoring. I was lucky to be able to use Monstro's character illustration, done by Aaron McBride, on the cover. The papers were then aged with an "old paper" layer in Photoshop to show that they had endured rain, heat and dirt. I added to this scripted item some additional "disaster" tabloids. Some were conceived as more professional-looking regional papers, others as hand-drawn local papers.

I will add here that in preproduction, I had no Italian translator. I tried my best with Google

Translate and marked each graphic with a note that said it had not been translated by a professional. This is not an approach I would accept during live-action filming; it causes too many problems, since Google doesn't offer the idiosyncrasies and colloquialisms of an actual language. I hope I won't be judged too harshly if there are mistakes in these pages. I am counting on Disney to double-check everything.

The second assignment for the wall were the two different wanted posters. One showed the dastardly duo of Honest John and Gideon, some of the first villains that the young impressionable Pinocchio meets. The other shows the coachman, who takes Pinocchio to Pleasure Island. Even though the film takes place in Italy, the filmmakers wanted a classic Wild West poster style that was a "quick read"



by Riccardo Domenicini

The deadly monstrosity sea scourge, commonly known as "Monstro", has once again reared his head in the Mediterranean off the coast of Collodi. He has been known to swallow the largest ships in the Italian fleet. He is believed to be 900 ft. long and has a voracious appetite.

Last week, a family of four was nearly killed while on a fishing trip. Luckily, the young boy

had been reading about mythological creatures of the deep and sounded the alarm in the knick of time. The family just made it to shore when the great beast spotted them.

Although no photo of the beast has been taken, the illustration above by a sea captain in 1887, is what most believe him to look like.

The earliest report of a monster in the vicinity of Italy appears in the Life of St. Columba by

Adomnán, written in the sixth century AD. According to Adomnán, writing about a century after the events described, a monk Saint Columba was staying in the land of the Picts with his companions when he encountered local residents burying a man in the Mediterranean. They explained that the man was swimming in the river when he was attacked by a "water

Continued on next page



showing who they were. Illustrations were by character artists Aaron McBride and Brian Mates, respectively. I wrote most of the text for this. It was fun to describe them as “always in cahoots” and Gideon as having an “over-active thyroid resulting in his over-bulging eyes.”

The third scripted item for the wall was a poster for the marionette show produced by the unscrupulous Stromboli. He travels the country using a gypsy-style wagon to present his shows and is the master of the puppets Sabina the Ballerina, a Russian Cossack, and a “cast of thousands.” Pinocchio is taken in by Stromboli and made to perform.



My first design was based on a classic Ringling Bros. Circus poster. I used artwork by the 19th century painter Camille Corot for the scenic backgrounds and illustrations by staff artists for the three characters. However, it was deemed too slick and professional-looking. Dechant wanted something that looked more handmade, so I came up with the red curtain option, but we struggled to get the charm and cheap-looking quality we were looking for. I continued to work on these throughout my stay on the show, but alas, we ran out of time. I believe the poster ended up being finished in England.

Geppetto's Workshop

Next, the audience meets Geppetto in his studio, making toys. While working on the establishing exterior roof sign, the team went back-and-forth about whether to use English or Italian, so the concept art was done in both languages. In my first design, I used an ornate, carved wooden frame and added to it various mechanical toys I found online. I felt that the movement of the toys would both make the sign more whimsical and help attract clients to Geppetto's shop. After I finished the first pass, the 3D environment for the shop had been completed and it was clear that the sign needed to be longer. I was then given screen captures of the outside of the building. I redesigned it using a completely different shape, keeping the animated

toys. By the last version, the mechanical toys were eliminated.

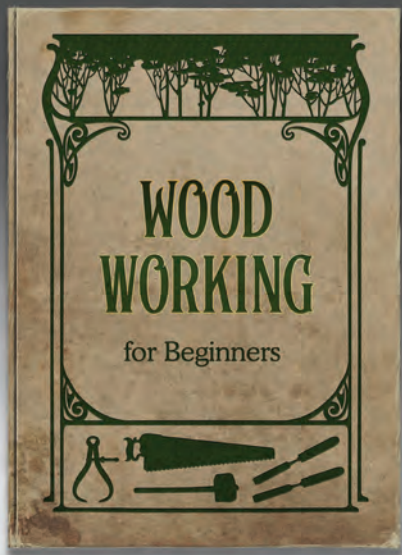
In addition to the roof sign, we also needed an outrigger. These are great for adding dimension and realistic complication to the scene as the characters walk down the street. I used some research from a European book published around 1900 and found the puppet on eBay. By this time, the producers had determined that the sign would be in Italian, but Jiminy Cricket would read it in English so everyone would know what it said. When Disney put out a teaser trailer that started with a shot of Geppetto's outrigger, I was NEVER more excited to see my work on film.

Another Geppetto project was his childhood woodworking book which he reads to Pinocchio after his new son comes to life. I have a personal collection of art nouveau book

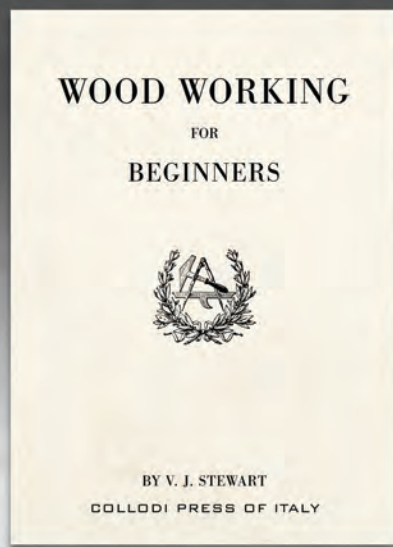
C. AN EARLY DESIGN THAT WAS DEEMED TOO PROFESSIONAL FOR THE ROUGH CONMAN, STROMBOLI.

D. THE FINAL DESIGN FOR THE OUTRIGGER SIGN.





(A)



(B)

A. THE FINAL COVER DESIGN FOR GEPPETTO'S CHILDHOOD WOOD WORKING BOOK.

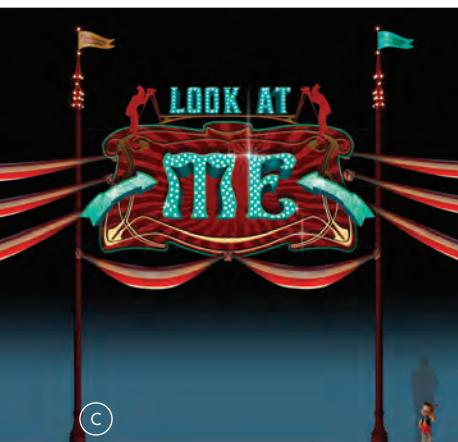
B. THE TITLE PAGE FOR GEPPETTO'S CHILDHOOD WOOD WORKING BOOK.

covers from around 1880–1920. I picked out a few and sent photos to Stefan as inspiration for the cover. Zemeckis wanted it to be a “young student” book, so I designed it for maximum readability and beauty, putting in simple tools and the beautiful trees that were the source of the wood. A title page was also done so Geppetto could open the book as he begins reading to Pinocchio.

Pleasure Island

Later in the film, Pinocchio is picked up by the coachman and his posse of young thugs and taken to the epitome of a degenerate amusement park—Pleasure Island. I first worked with Stefan on ideas, then transitioned to working with Doug Chiang when he became available. The signage for the rides I would need to design were the huge fireworks stand, where there was no limit to the explosives that could be detonated; “Clock Stoppers,” where children could smash elaborate wooden clocks similar to the ones Geppetto makes; “Sugar Mountain,” where visitors could get super-wired—eating sweets to their hearts’ content; “Shop N Lift,” where visitors could steal anything they see without consequences; “Vanity at the Fair,” where a hall of mirrors makes patrons look especially beautiful; and “Camera Obscura,” the ultimate selfie station.

First, the production had to decide how the light in the amusement park would be sourced. The bright lights in the Illustrator’s concept drawings seemed to indicate that the rides were lit by neon. But that seemed too modern, so we decided to just use



(C)



(D)



(E)



(F)

lightbulbs to provide signage illumination, which was more period-appropriate in the early 20th century.

Using Doug Chiang's keyframe illustrations, I set about refining the signage that he had roughed in and doing elaborate renderings of each to sell the ideas. Some, such as the fireworks station, went through many different phases. I'll admit that I grew quite attached to the pinwheel version—which features spinning dials of exploding fireworks going off, but it was deemed too small and I kept going. Instead of getting frustrated, I considered it an opportunity to design something else. It was all so fun, so what did it matter? For my last version, I found some old Victorian valentines that I worked into the design, giving it more of a sideshow look, with cloth banners and large can lights on the "fireworks" lettering that better matched the size of the lettering in Doug's drawing.

I went through quite a few designs for all the Pleasure Island signage. For "Sugar Mountain," I used the keyframe illustration as a base

and further refined the signage with gumdrop footlights, Tyrolian brackets and candy-coated lettering. For "Clock Stoppers," I replaced the hands of the clock with croquet mallets and edged it with electric lightbulbs. While researching concepts for working on "Camera Obscura," I had found some art nouveau research that I really loved but realized that it moved too far away from the keyframe sketch. So, it was redesigned to elaborate on what Chiang had already done.

The Seaside Town of Collodi

I was initially hired for about six weeks, but I found myself longing to stay on the film to make a greater contribution to the overall look of the graphics. Because the design of the town was still being worked on, there weren't elevations of the facades and the set decorating team hadn't decided on what kind of shops Collodi should feature. So, I hatched a plan to continue my involvement in the project. I said to Stefan and Doug Meerdink, "What if I do a signage palette that will establish the look but won't be specific to any building? That way, when you get to England, you can put it up on the wall and be that much ahead of the game." They agreed.

C. THE FINAL IDEA FOR THE CAMERA OBSCURA SHOP BRINGING IT IN LINE WITH DOUG CHIANG'S ORIGINAL ILLUSTRATION.

D. THE FINAL DESIGN FOR SUGAR MOUNTAIN EXTRAPOLATED FROM AN ILLUSTRATION BY DOUG CHIANG.

E. AN IDEA FOR THE "CLOCK STOPPERS" RIDE WHERE KIDS SMASH-UP BEAUTIFULLY MADE CUCKOO CLOCKS. THIS IS ESPECIALLY BAD FOR PINOCCHIO BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT HIS 'FATHER' DOES FOR A LIVING.

F. THE FINAL DESIGN FOR THE FIREWORKS STAND.

G. PLEASURE ISLAND. IMAGE FROM THE FINAL FILM.

H. DESIGN FOR A TOWN WAYFINDING SIGN.



G



H

A



A. AN OUTRIGGER SIGN FOR A HOTEL.

B. ITALIAN SIGN RESEARCH SHEET.

C. A GELATO STREET VENDOR. THE SIGN ATTACHES TO THEIR CART.

D-F. SHOP AND RESTAURANT SIGNS.

G. CONCEPT WORK FOR THE TOWN OF COLLODI PROVIDING A FEEL FOR THE SIGNAGE IN GENERAL.

H. JIMINY CRICKET ON THE STREETS OF COLLODI. IMAGE FROM THE FINAL FILM.



D



WINDOW SHOWCARD

E



F



I first did a Google search, both in English and Italian, to get the proper research. It turns out that many signs of the period were made of sheet metal—not a problem in our imaginary environment. I put together two sheets of research. One had signs on buildings, street signs, house numbers, wayfinding signs and even a gelato stand. The other sheet had smaller signs, called showcards, that could be used in shop windows. As I extrapolated from each one, I marked it in red to see my progress. There were all types of businesses, from high-brow hotels to modest bars, photo studios to water-ice vendors. I tried to use an overall palette of sea colors: greens, aquas and blues, with a few pops of red and gold. I used the most fanciful research photos without going too unrealistic—fun but not too ridiculous. Some had beautiful typography and some had poorly spaced letters indicating it had been created “by the owner” and not by a professional lettering person. Other signs were just roughly painted on the buildings’ exterior walls.



Stefan Dechant,
Doug Chiang,
Production Designers
Doug Meerdink,
Supervising Art Director
Vlad Bina,
VAD Art Director
Travis Witkowski,
Assistant Art Director
Ron Mendell,
Daniela Medeiros,
Specialist Set Designers
Patrick Dunn-Baker,
Trinh Vu, Jane Wu,
Set Designers
Fae Corrigan,
Senior Illustrator
Rodolfo Damaggio,
Wil Madoc Rees,
Craig Sellars,
Illustrators
Karen TenEyck,
Graphic Designer

I also made many hand-painted showcard borders that the English staff could fill in when the shops' purposes became more specific. Stefan could not have been more supportive of this process and it was tremendous fun; basically, I just designed what I thought was appropriate and might be needed. When they were all complete, I put together the large-style board and marked the clearance details on separate files so the English staff would have all the legal information they needed to present to Disney when locking the film.

The Joy of Animation

Much as was the case in my work on *Alice Through the Looking Glass*, this show was such a joy to design. I felt artistically challenged and used to my full potential as a Graphic Designer. I was having such a great time that I would often not realize that it was the end of the day, and I think that's the greatest compliment of all to the team. Thank you, Stefan Dechant, Doug Chiang and Doug Meerdink for having me. Let's do it again—I love not having to worry about gravity. **ADG**





In Apple TV+’s series *Severance*, Lumon Industries employees on the underground “severed” floor have a chip implanted in their brains that prevents their work selves from knowing anything about who they are in the outside world; outside, these people know that they work for Lumon, but nothing about what they do there. *Severance* is created by Dan Erickson and executive-produced by Ben Stiller, who directed six of the nine episodes.



Fun, Strange, Powerful THE WORK/LIFE WORLD OF SEVERANCE

BY JEREMY HINDLE, PRODUCTION DESIGNER

I've always wanted to do projects that were really different from each other. I loved that I did *Zero Dark Thirty*, a war movie, then *Detroit*, a period thriller, then *Top Gun: Maverick*, which was big.

When I read *Severance*, it felt like *Twin Peaks*, something you could watch a million times and still try to figure it out. *Severance* is about the work/life balance. Ben and I laugh about fighting the work/life balance making this show. We started before COVID for five months, and then it shut down. I came home to Los Angeles, and I worked out of my house for four more months.

I met Ben through the cinematographer, Jessica Lee Gagné. I did a quick look book for him, and we clicked together instantly. Dan Erickson's writing is amazing, but it didn't have a look, it was just an underground office that went forever. It felt like the underground had to be its own special world. I wanted to customize everything in the show, so the audience wouldn't have seen it before.

It was really a Ben Stiller show. Me and Ben, Dan the writer and Jessica the DP, fleshed out the tone, the humor, the aesthetic, how to shoot it, the "innie" world versus the "outie" world.

A. MACRODATA
REFINEMENT AREA
BUILT ON STAGE.
PRODUCTION STILL.



A

A. LUMON INDUSTRIES EXTERIOR, AERIAL VIEW. ILLUSTRATION BY JAMIE RAMA IN PHOTOSHOP.

B. MACRODATA REFINEMENT WORKSTATION. SET PHOTO.

The Art Department had four concept artists, including Hugh Sicotte, who worked every day on renderings for the Lumon founder paintings, five Set Designers, two consecutive Supervising Art Directors, and a Graphic Artist, Tansy Michaud, whose work is mind-blowing.

I didn't want technology to peg when this was happening, whether it's ten years ago, or ten years from now. I tried to use as much analog as possible. I didn't want any new mobile phones, but that's how people communicate in the "outie" world.

LUMON INDUSTRIES-Exterior

Severance was shot in New York, where Apple had new stages in the Bronx. I thought the Lumon headquarters exterior should look like the beautiful John Deere building in Illinois, designed by Eero Saarinen and Kevin Roche.

Bell Labs, designed by the same team, came up as a possible location for the Lumon exterior. It's now a mall with around a million square feet of space that was the original Bell Telephone Company, where they designed the satellite and the phone. It's in New Jersey, and it was spectacularly restored. The production convinced the owners to let us shoot there. We did a lot of visual effects to remove stuff on the roof and most of the trees around it. We wanted the glass structure to look monolithic.

Interior

Looking at '60s and '70s office spaces, most are super-sterile, incredibly professional, and beautifully designed, with a desk set, a phone, a Rolodex, one pen, a calendar. They didn't have any personal items. That was the look the show wanted.

Everything on Lumon's "severed" floors had its own playful world. I referenced the '60s Jacques Tati film *Playtime*. The Lumon workers who are severed are "born" into this office in the boardroom where the severance takes place.



B

In episode two, the severance brain surgery procedure is shown. The production had a neurosurgeon tech, Vijay Agarwal, who took us through the procedure—not that the severance chip would work, but we learned about how ketamine can take away the last hour of your memories. Pretty much all the surgical equipment in the scene is real.

I thought: Let's make a rule that Lumon doesn't buy anything from outside vendors. They manufacture everything themselves underground, so no one would ever know what they're doing. Once they've invented the Lumon computer, it lasts forever. If they have their own computers, they'd be like iMacs in the '80s, interesting to look at, but practical. The tech was designed to actually work for the actors.

The DP Jessica, set decorator Andrew Baseman and I and had a lot of conversations about how the show was going to be lit with practical lights as much as possible. Sometimes the shape of the lighting fixtures would give Jessica the lighting she wanted.

The MDR

Macrodata Refinement, aka the MDR, is the severed department where Mark (Adam Scott), Helly (Britt Lower), Dylan (Zach Cherry) and Irving (John Turturro) work. They sit at right angles to each other at a square green desk, divided by movable partitions, in the middle of an enormous rectangular room with a green



floor. Rectangular shapes are repeated throughout Lumon; it felt nice to have longer spaces.

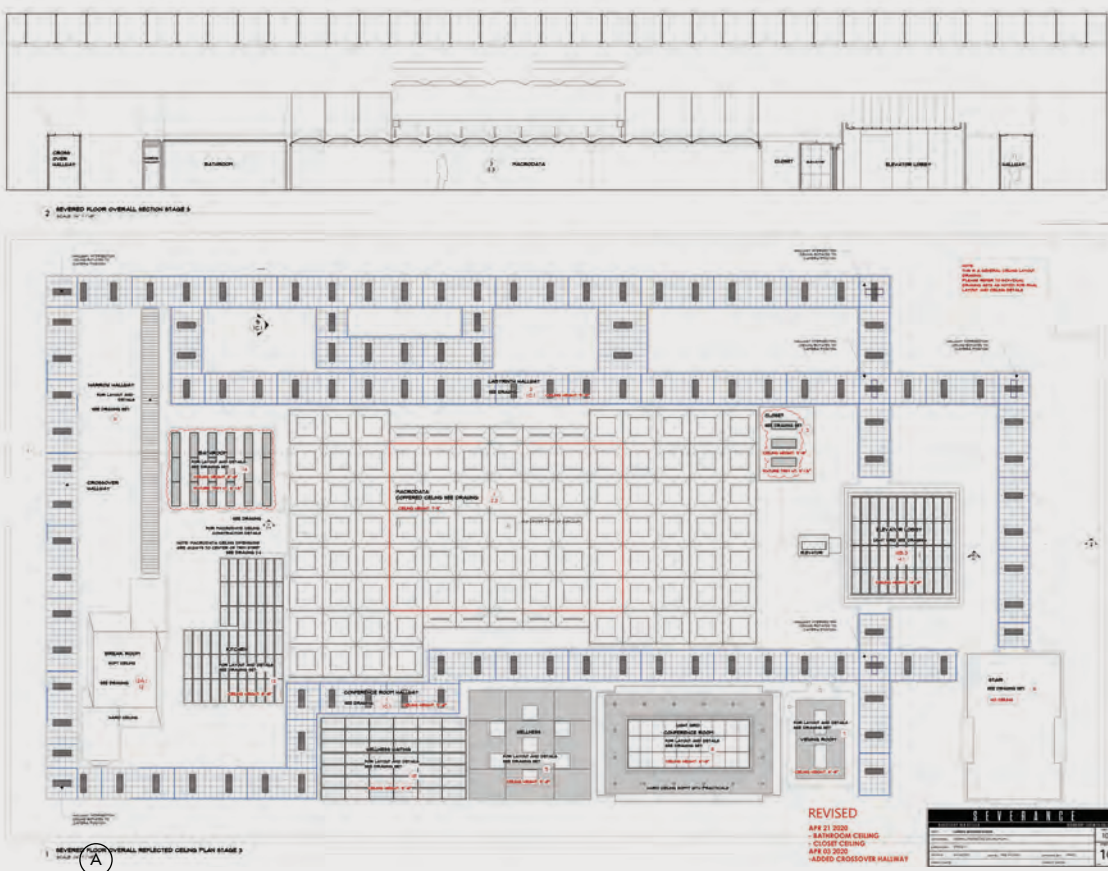
The MDR is basically a grassy playground. Dan wrote, "Four desks in a very large room." I wanted to make this a desk that they could interact with. We knew we were going to spend a lot of time here. This space had to be visually arresting. Jessica had ideas for framing in these office spaces that were quite wide—wide lens, eerie, mysterious. We decided the ceiling needed to be low, to feel claustrophobic. The employees are monitored on security cameras all the time. We

C. CONFERENCE ROOM. ILLUSTRATION.

D. & E. CONFERENCE ROOM SPEAKER AND MDR COMPUTER. CONCEPT DESIGN BY ERIC FEHLBERG USING FUSION 360 AND KEYSHOT.

F. MACRODATA REFINEMENT AREA. ILLUSTRATION BY FREDI BUCH AND ERIC FEHLBERG. DESK BY DAVID SWAYZE.





was twenty by thirty feet, with hundreds of programmable lights.

Cobel's Office

Cobel (Patricia Arquette) is the senior Lumon executive on the severed floor, the one person there who is not severed. Just as the green in MDR is like grass, the blue in Cobel's office is like the sky.

Cobel's office gets a little artificial sunlight, because she is conscious of what sunlight is, and that she's not getting it. She has a triptych painting of a stormy sky behind her desk. I loved that each severed character would come in, not know what the sky is, look at her, and the painting, and be wowed. And she is a storm.

The Break Room

At Lumon, the break room is where disobedient employees are broken. Helly is forced to read a formal apology here over and over. Dan wrote that it was projected on a wall. I wanted to see the yellow words projected on her somehow, like it was being burned into her face, embedded into her brain. I came up with this little desk where Helly sits across from her tormentor, Milchick (Tramell Tillman). He can see her, but the way the lighting was positioned, she'd never be able to see him, just

were playing with how would you watch them? If they were in a smaller room, they'd never leave their desks, but in a big space, it's fun to watch what they do.

All the Lumon sets have practical ceilings that can be flown up and down remotely, because the techno-crane couldn't get far enough up above the set otherwise. There's no lateral ceiling movement anywhere. The center section of the MDR ceiling

A. SEVERED FLOOR
REFLECTED CEILING PLAN.

B. COBEL'S OFFICE.
PRODUCTION STILL.



the letters on the glass. The set's very Escher, it has no right angles. I had all the walls leaning in, so there was always a weight pushing down on Helly.

The text projection was practical, as was most of the show. I like to give the director the ability to shoot without being compromised about camera angles, or anything else. I also think doing things practically is important for the actors.

Founder Spaces

Lumon was founded by Kier Eagan in 1866 and has been run by his descendants ever since. There are areas devoted to the Lumon founders, including a display of lifelike statues of each Eagan. Dan, Ben and I decided to do something like the Disneyland US Presidents exhibit.

There's also a perfect replica of Kier's house and front yard. When the show was scouting remotely, there was a museum in the Bronx that had an amazing Brutalist building, a beautiful grassy area and a vintage house that we referenced.

Hallways

The production had two soundstages with white Lumon hallways. The first had at least a hundred feet of hallways, as well as the MDR, the break room, the boardroom and the staircase. There were



two main hallways that were a hundred forty feet long, with intersections.

The hallway walls and corners were completely changeable. Sometimes an end was removed and VXF would do a set extension, so it could look like it was five hundred feet long. There were doors that are interchangeable and glass walls that were inserted to see into the conference rooms.

Elevator

The hardest set was probably the elevator, which is shoulder-width wide. When the face of an actor is seen in the elevator, it's shot with a robotic camera on a robotic arm that travels about thirty feet in less than a second, just enough to alter the parallax of their faces to the background. The elevator exists as both part of a hallway set and a separate set that breaks apart in pieces, because the camera's got to wrap around it.

C. BREAK ROOM. ILLUSTRATION, BY ERIC FEHLBERG, USING SKETCHUP AND KEYSHOT.

D. PERPETUITY WING. ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID SWAYZE.





A-C. SEVERED FLOOR
HALLWAYS AND ELEVATOR.
ILLUSTRATIONS BY FREDI BUCH
AND ERIC FEHLBERG.

D. SEVERED ELEVATOR LOBBY.
PRODUCTION STILL.

E. OPTICS AND DESIGN ENTRY.
PRODUCTION STILL.

F. OPTICS AND DESIGN FRONT
ROOM. ILLUSTRATION BY HUGH
SICOTTE.

THE OUTSIDE WORLD- Mark's House/Cobel's House

Because outside-world Mark has no memory of his work life, he doesn't realize that his next-door neighbor is actually his Lumon boss, Cobel.

Mark and Cobel live in a community where the houses are of different sizes, but all are blue, with peaked roofs. Location manager Mike Buonanno and I found a community where the houses really

were Lumon blue. It visually arced up into the hill, it felt nestled, it had a good view across the river into where visual effects could be used to show the town. But also, each one of the houses is individually broken up in a strange way, which felt like the way Mark is very fractured. It was aesthetically beautiful, but hauntingly strange. Mark's house interiors and Cobel's house interiors were built on stage. They're built at different



heights. Cobel's house interior set is about twenty feet in the air. The crew built the side of each of their houses that were facing each other onstage. They could be shot walking up to their houses on stage, and then walking inside, and then looking out a window. Mark can't see Cobel, but she has vantage points through every one of her windows into his place.

Ricken & Devon's House

Mark's sister Devon (Jen Tullock) is married to writer Ricken (Michael Chernus). The cover of Ricken's new book is bright orange, which contrasts with the Lumon blues and greens. Ricken is the most accentuated character in the show, which is why their house has bright colors.

I wanted Ricken and Devon to live in a house that was the opposite of Lumon. The production found a house that was designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in Pleasantville, New York, a community of about three hundred houses. About ten of them were designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, and the rest were designed by his proteges and people that worked for him.

The original house that I picked couldn't be used because of COVID, the original owner was ninety-six. Coincidentally, he used to work at Bell Labs. We ended up shooting at another Frank Lloyd Wright house in the same Pleasantville neighborhood.



One thing I loved in Dan's writing is the question: Why are we doing things the way that we are? We can't keep going this way.

The possibilities and the world of *Severance* are endless. I thought about how the creators of this space were inventing these severed employee characters, and Lumon could make the employees do whatever they want. Dan's writing was the license to do that, and Ben gave me the license to do it as a designer.

Designing *Severance* is probably my most experimental work. The production wanted to create something super-fun, and super-strange, and powerful. We all did it together, and we were all on the same page. You don't get that very often. **ADG**

Jeremy Hindle,
Production Designer
Nic Francone,
Additional Production Design
Chris Shriver,
Supervising Art Director
Angelica Borrero,
Art Director
Hingi Kim, Stephen Davan,
Emma Mendelson,
Jeannette Kim,
Juliana Barreto Barreto,
Adrienne Carlile,
Katya Blumenberg,
Assistant Art Directors
Fredi Buch, Eric Fehlberg,
David Swayze,
Hugh Sicotte, Jamie Rama,
Concept Artists
Tansy Michaud,
Graphic Artist
Andrew Baseman,
Set Decorator

G. RICKEN & DEVON'S HOUSE. SET PHOTO.

H. EXTERIOR LUMON INDUSTRIES.





A

Staging a Rescue

CREATING THE CAVERNOUS WORLD OF *THIRTEEN LIVES*

BY MOLLY HUGHES, PRODUCTION DESIGNER, WITH BRANDT GORDON, SUPERVISING ART DIRECTOR

B





In the summer of 2020, Ron Howard and I began working together, breaking down Bill Nicholson's script for *Thirteen Lives*, the story of the complex rescue of the Wild Boar soccer team from Tham Luang cave in Northern Thailand. For several months over Zoom calls, with his executive producer and first AD Bill Connor, we worked through storyboards, talking to the divers whose story we were portraying, and sharing ideas back-and-forth based on images we found that spoke to us, or things we were learning directly from those involved in the events. This time was essential for helping us zero in on a path forward, simplifying the daunting two-and-a-half-mile rescue journey deep into the cave down to a number of key sets that would tell this story. Ron was keen to let the events unfold as authentically as possible, with a level of documentary-style realism that highlighted the heroism of not only the divers, but the massive international volunteer effort surrounding the rescue.

As the months progressed, and the pandemic rolled on, it became clear that the production would not be able to shoot anything at the site of the real cave, so we settled on shooting the film in Queensland, Australia. With its rainforest conditions much like Northern Thailand, we were confident that we could find an exterior location to build our large cave exterior and its supporting base camps. We had intended to go into Village Roadshow Studios with their existing water tanks to build the tunnel sets, but Baz Luhrmann's *Elvis* was suffering delays due to the pandemic and would remain in the stages too long for us to follow. So, we changed course; knowing that we were committed to Queensland for its look and generous tax credit, we began looking for alternative warehouse spaces which could facilitate the design, engineering and fabrication of our own tanks and cave system.

For the build of the story's main exterior sets, the cave entrance and supporting base camps, the production settled on a farm in Mudgeeraba, Queensland. A portion of the multi-acre site was cleared and gravel was laid to outline the groundwork for the substantial cave entrance build at one end of the property, and the build of the government buildings used for meetings and

A. SCALE MODEL OF CHAMBER 1.

B. CHAMBER 1 CONCEPT ILLUSTRATION.

A. DIVERS' CAMP AND CAVE ENTRANCE. SITE PLAN.

B. CAVE ENTRANCE IN PROGRESS.

C. CAVE ENTRANCE. PRODUCTION STILL.



A JAN 2021
CAVE ENTRANCE + BASE CAMP 2
BOOMERANG SITE PLAN

DATE	2021.02.12	SCALE	1:500	SHOT	
PROJECT	CAVE ENTRANCE	003	2021.02.12	1:500	
CLIENT	THIRTEEN LIVES				
LOCATION	BOOMERANG SITE PLAN				
DESIGNER					
ARTIST					
PRODUCTION					
EDITING					
SOUND					
VFX					
POST-PRODUCTION					
FINAL					



diver refuge at the opposite end. Sprawling tent encampments were then erected between the sites, illustrating the massive volunteer undertaking.

The Art Department had many photos of the infrastructure of the rescue, so I took the most powerful and incorporated them into the design. Unlike the real Tham Luang, I decided to position the mouth of the cave directly at the top of a slightly curving and narrowing staircase, to give the impression of this powerful being, the cave itself, overlooking the site. By positioning the cave entrance in this way, the divers would emerge from their dark and treacherous journey, descending the stairs into the colorful chaos of the base camp below; likewise, upon entering, they would rise from this chaos to the eerie quiet of the looming cave system ahead of them. In a scene where, minutes after the divers discover the boys and they ask that the news be kept quiet, it is revealed that by the time they emerge from the cave at the top of the stairs, they look out onto the frenetic camp site and watch the news of their discovery traveling across it. This cave layout accentuated that rapid information journey.

By building a substantial portion of the cave entrance on this site, the blocking could carry actors up the stairs and into the mouth of the cave in a continuous flow all the way to the railing where they could look out as if down in to Chamber 1, the cavernous space that was the main entrance to the tunnel system. The built Chamber 1 on the stage and the entrance were seamlessly connected with the help of VXF supervisor Jason Billington.

For the submerged tunnel sets, the production built four 100-foot-long custom water tanks, ten feet deep at a newly constructed industrial complex in Yatala, Queensland. An Australian company, Event Engineering, designed the tanks and complex filtration system to fit our specific needs. The modular design consisted of upright steel braces bolted to the concrete floor and connected to steel-frame sidewalls clad with a double layer of plywood. A pool liner was then installed within each enclosure. Since the



construction of the tanks and the underwater sets had to happen concurrently, one side of each tank had to remain open until we were ready to install each tunnel set into its tank. This helped preserve the integrity of the pool liner by keeping most of the welding and heavy machinery involved in the tunnel construction out of the tank interior.

As the design development of the tunnel and cave system evolved, a number of techniques were employed for different phases of the design process. Through the close examination of a

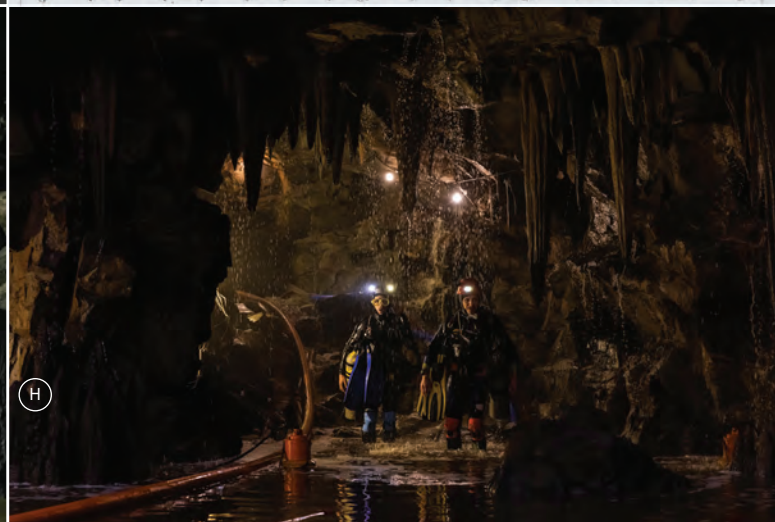
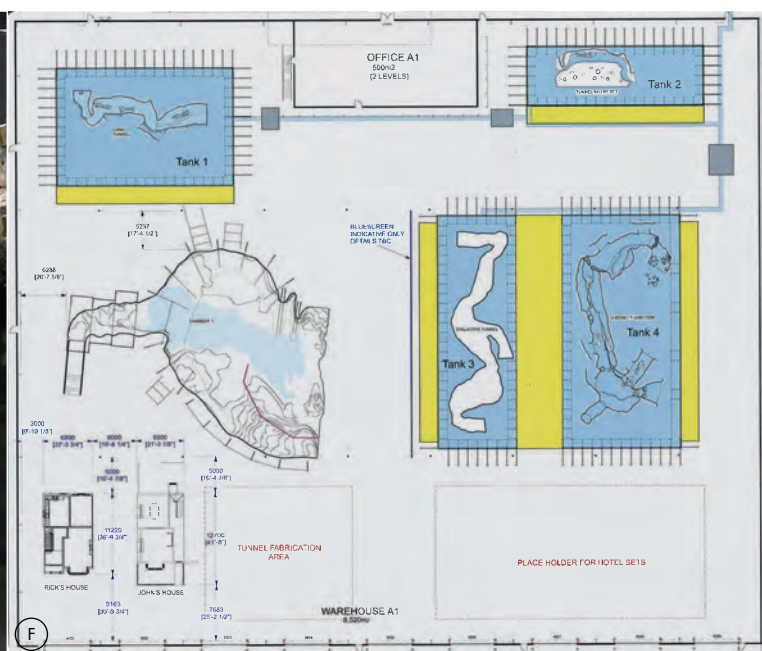
D. LOOKING INTO CHAMBER 1 FROM THE CAVE ENTRANCE. VXF STITCH.

E. CHAMBER 1 IN PROGRESS.

F. TANKS STAGE PLAN.

G. CHAMBER 1 IN PROGRESS.

H. CHAMBER 1 PRODUCTION STILL.





Blender to develop environments and work through the scripted action. We discovered that for the larger chamber sets, like where the divers first enter the cave in Chamber 1, where they set up their internal base camp in Chamber 3, and where they find the boys in Chamber 9, physical models were the most useful and informative. Because of the number of departments involved in the use of each set, not just Ron and DP Sayombhu Mokdeeprom, but the 2nd unit director Charlie Croughwell, the 2nd unit DP Andrew Rowlands, the underwater camera operator Simon Christidis, the dive stunt team supervisor Andrew Allen, all had needs that had to be considered in the design process of each set. The balsa and foam models created by Model Maker Ronnie Rametta were essential in determining wild walls, placement of camera portals, discussing lighting and safety considerations, and conveying action and screen direction for this complicated journey. The models were also carefully detailed by Ronnie to suggest the texture and character of each set. This was invaluable to the construction and sculpting teams in translating the drawings and interpreting the photo research; to ultimately bring these sets to life.

VR technology was used primarily for the cave entrance and divers' base camp build at the farm location. The immersive quality of VR was a great aid in showing the key relationship between the divers' camp, where the swath of tents for secondary workers were placed around structures used for meetings and diver support,

A. CAVE TUNNEL MODELED IN BLENDER.

B. CAVE TUNNEL. CONCEPT ILLUSTRATION.

C. DIVERS RETURNING TO CHAMBER 3. CONCEPT ILLUSTRATION.

National Geographic lidar scan of Tham Luang, I realized that the real cave system didn't have quite the rocky dramatic setting I was looking for, but I could use the basic shapes of some areas as a place to start, and then enhance each set for the needs of the story. Since there was no visibility in the cave during the dive, it allowed the freedom to create a unique internal cave system to play out specific underwater events in the script.

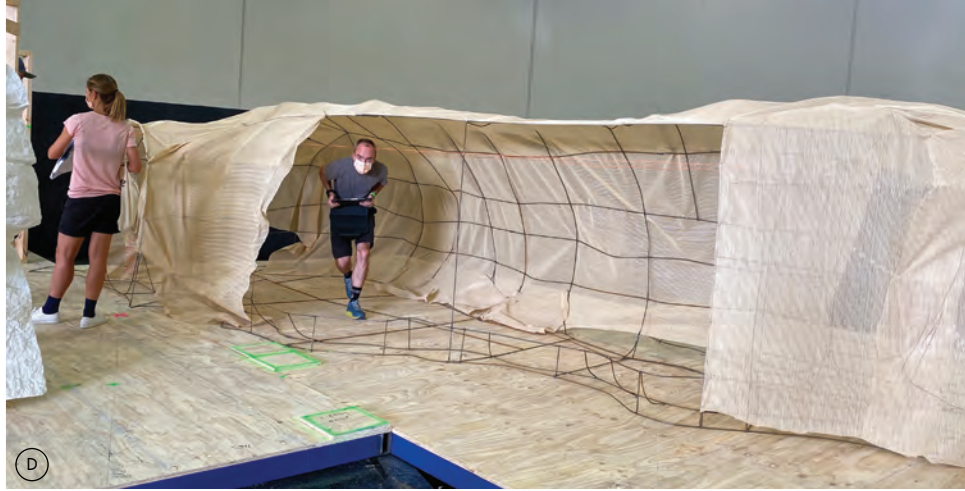
Led by Supervising Art Director Brandt Gordon, the team of Art Directors and Set Designers created basic fly-throughs and animatics in



and the main base camp, which included the large cave entrance, and the focal point of the Princess shrine. This was also the base for military operations of the Navy SEALs and other government entities. VR technology was also helpful in determining the VFX requirement for set extensions and the use of foreground greens to help blend this transition.

Simultaneously, Illustrator Liam Beck and I were developing concept illustrations not only to show Ron and others on the team my intentions for each set, but also for helping us define a lighting language with Sayombhu for the caverns and underwater cave system. We wanted to create a style of just enough light to keep the audience engrossed in the story, but dark enough to also keep the audience gripped in the realistically claustrophobic nature of the divers' journey.

As the design progressed, the crew created full-size tunnel mock-ups to allow every department to understand and explore the relationship of the tunnel environments to the action. With simple wire frame and lightweight canvas, the team could crawl through each space to feel the physical realities for themselves. There were many set reviews with Ron in this manner, everyone crawling around the sets, solidifying the specific beats he had in mind like tight squeezes, falling rocks, trapped lines, narrowing tunnels that became nearly impassable when flooded. We also had to always consider the direction of water flow, so that in post-production editor James Wilcox would be able to know whether footage could be used for coming in or going out of the cave.



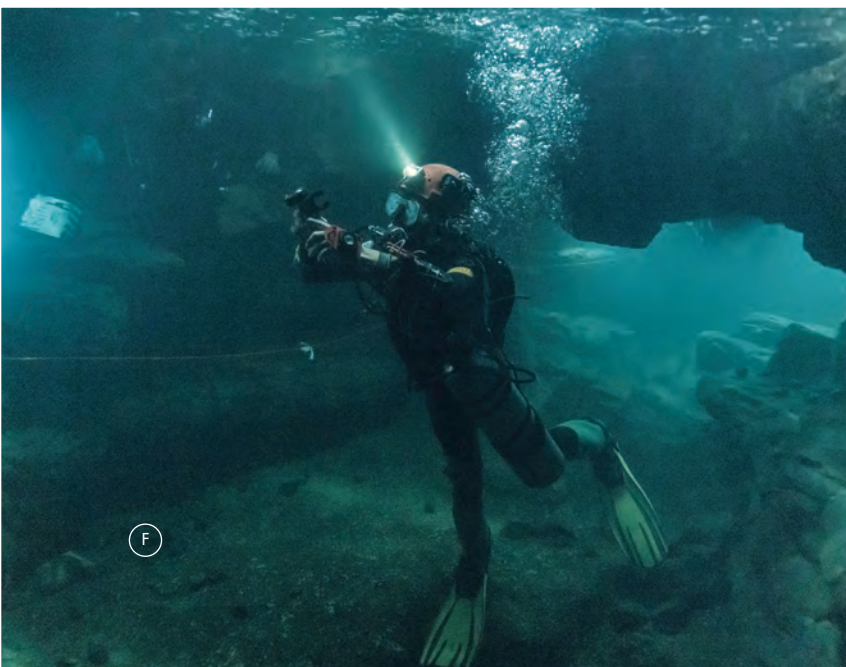
Concurrent to the design process was the ongoing logistical challenge of delivering the sets in an ever-narrowing timeframe. The Art Department had to allow for preproduction set rehearsals, camera tests, diver safety and actor familiarization, and before all of that, we had to fill the tanks, heat the water and test the filtration systems. Although in the final film there is a lot of debris in the water, for shooting it had to be absolutely clear in order to see the divers' faces. The debris was added in post by VFX; so the built filtration system had to hold up over weeks of shooting.

D. TUNNEL MOCK-UP.

E. ROCK TEXTURE AND COLOR TEST.

F. DIVER IN A TUNNEL. PRODUCTION STILL.

G. DIVER WITH STALACTITES. PRODUCTION STILL.





The production decided to start principal photography in the Chamber 9 set, where the boys were found. There were almost two weeks of first unit work scheduled in this set, so starting here would allow the actors to acclimate to shooting in water for many hours a day. It also gave Ron and the boys, almost all local to the Chiang Rai region and new to acting, time to rehearse in the space. By completing the Chamber 9 work early in the shooting schedule, we were also then able to strike the set and repurpose the tank for building Chamber 4.

Fortunately, little of the cave structure is visible in the grainy footage, so I was free to spell out the vocabulary of rock form and color here that would then be a toolkit for the rest of the chambers and caves. This was also where the boys were sedated and prepped for their journey, so an area was needed for this to take place, keeping the space tight while allowing enough room for twenty or so people to be in the water at one time. I decided that color-wise, this would be the darkest set, with the rock nearly black in places, to give the feeling that they're almost entombed in this space over a mile from the entrance.

A. CHAMBER 9 MODEL IN PROGRESS.

B. CHAMBER 9 REHEARSAL.

C. CHAMBER 9 DURING SHOOT.

As revealed by GoPro footage seen around the world, Chamber 9 is where the boys became trapped and ultimately found by divers Rick and John. Ron wanted to recreate this footage as precisely as possible, so I was mindful of creating a space where this could be shown accurately.

The construction team, led by Ross Clarke, and sculpting teams, led by Alex Beere, made great progress and the form of Chamber 9 advanced quickly. This allowed for early set walk-throughs where Ron and the team could consider the best methods to work within the space.



This methodology became useful for the construction of all the chamber sets going forward; there was always much discussion of both camera and safety portals based on screen direction, and camera platforms were added for crane use. To meet the needs of the complex spaces, the crew created barn doors in the walls of the sets that when closed, sealed the spaces and when open, allowed for a camera crane and divers and actors to move in and out with ease. This method allowed Ron and Sayombhu the freedom to shoot from any angle with multiple cameras and not worry about having to rely heavily on VFX in the post process.



D

Once the actors, led by Viggo Mortensen and Colin Farrell, arrived on the scene and began working in the first underwater sets, they felt compelled to do their own stunt work as much as possible. This decision gave Ron the opportunity for longer shots that ended and started in close-ups, without having to cut away to a double. Suddenly, across all of the sets, consideration had to be given to the split of 1st and 2nd unit and the sharing of actors, divers, set elements and stage space, creating another layer of complication for the timing of set delivery. Certain sets also had multiple water levels that required change-over time to drain, refill and rehear.

Along with all of this were the challenges faced by the set decorating team, led by Emma Rudkin, who worked to import as much from Thailand as possible for the base camps and Thai house sets,

to be sure she could keep the sets authentically dressed. She and her team had buyers in Thailand who shopped remotely for us, packing a large container full of tents, umbrellas, chairs, and smaller goods that were shipped over for the extensive camps and Thai house sets. The assistance of Thai Art Director Lek Chunsuttiwat, who came over early in prep from Thailand to work with the Art Department for the duration of the film, was invaluable to the design and build process, helping us understand the nuances of Thai tradition and custom as evoked in the script. The result was thrilling; the Thai actors were so excited by the authenticity that it helped everyone be transported to the world of the story.

Propmaster Lisa Brennan faced her own challenges—the authenticity of the divers’ gear and the complexity of the procedure by which the boys were

D. CHAMBER 4 WITH CRANE IN PLACE.

E. TUNNEL TO CHAMBER 9 BUILD.



E



A

brought out required close attention to detail. Thankfully, the film had the full support of a very experienced dive team, as well as the real divers Rick Stanton, Jason Mallinson and John Volanthen, who were readily available to offer precise details for masks, fins, belts, tanks and other dive gear. Both Art Director Brandt Gordon and I became scuba certified while making the film, which helped our perspective toward the whole process.

Toward the end of filming, when it became clear that the crew was not going to be able to go to Thailand due to increased COVID cases, we found a beautiful location in the Numinbah Valley to tell the story of the water diversion efforts that greatly contributed to the rescue. Lek and Emma created

damming and sandbagging techniques to teach the extras to help simplify the story of how the water was being diverted from the cave. We built a small workman's hut on the same site where the local rice farmers gathered to be asked to flood their fields. The visual effects team then added in the rice fields and flooding in post-production. In the end, as COVID cases began to recede, Ron was able to direct, via Zoom, a small Thai team led by Sayombhu to get some wonderful shots of the mountain, as well as beautiful wide shots of the kids on their bikes heading toward the cave. All of this was essential to selling the beauty and power of Tham Luang, and grounding a seamlessly authentic Thai story that was entirely fabricated in Australia. **ADG**

A. DIVERS' CAMP.
PRODUCTION STILL.

B. RON HOWARD AND
COLIN FARRELL REHEARSING
IN CHAMBER 3.

C. THAI FAMILY HOUSE.
BUILT SET. SET PHOTO.

D. FLOODED RICE FIELD,
ILLUSTRATION OVER
PRODUCTION STILL.

E. WATER DIVERSION.
PRODUCTION STILL.

F. CHAMBER 1 TUNNEL.
PRODUCTION STILL.



B



C



D



E

Molly Hughes,
Production Designer
Brandt Gordon,
Supervising Art Director
Tarnia Nicol, Chaiyan "Lek" Chunsuttiwat,
Carlo Crescini, Mara Garanzini,
Sawut "Bee" Jeeracharoen (Thailand),
Art Directors
Brian Nickless, Boontawee "Thor" Taweepasas (Thailand),
Assistant Art Directors
Rachel Van Baarle, Mackenzie Platt,
Scott Hegarty, Teri Fairhurst,
Set Designers
Ron Rametta,
Model Maker
Liam Beck,
Concept Illustrator
George Kabot, Samantha Dabrowski,
Graphic Artists
Graeme Callander, Peter Sheehan,
Storyboard Artists
Emma Rudkin,
Set Decorator



F



Expanding Tolkien's World

THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RINGS OF POWER

BY RAMSEY AVERY, PRODUCTION DESIGNER

A

*If you had the patience and skill to sculpt stone to your deepest desire,
how would you shape it—and how would it shape you?*

*If you are immortal beings, who've already lived in a version of Heaven,
what type of a kingdom would you build for yourselves now, outside of paradise?*

*If you had to carry your entire world with you, and be able to hide it all in a flash,
how would you survive?*

*If your ancestors fought on the side of a great evil, and now you are only allowed the
barest means of sustenance, what would you decide to keep from the past?*

*If the gods granted you a bounteous island and guided you with wisdom, but you grew
to resent that they also made you mortal, what civilization would you build?*



That is the Middle Earth of the Second Age, more than three thousand years before the Third Age world, featured in Peter Jackson’s movies. The Third Age was a time of war and decay. The Second Age is a world at peace. After the destruction of a brutal war that sank a whole continent, the cultures of Middle Earth have rebuilt themselves into a Golden Age, alive and vibrant and filled with beauty.

The series tells its story in an eight-hour movie, eight chapters filled with new locations and scenery, all of worlds at a time never seen on screen before. Essentially, it is the scope and scale

of three Marvel movies, and the series is going to produce it on the schedule of two, with the budget of one. (And during a pandemic...)

There were six cultures to fully flesh out and design, including four complete cities, and a couple of “working” ships. And, in keeping with the depth of Tolkien’s world, there were other remnant or distant cultures to create and integrate.

To make it even more interesting, I was brought in halfway through preproduction, with the Art Department facing significant budget and

A. NÚMENÓREAN SHIPS SAILING IN THE GREAT HARBOR. PRODUCTION STILL FROM THE FINISHED FILM. FULLY DIGITAL SHOT USING SCANS OF THE ACTUAL BUILT SHIPS.

A. SAURON'S FORGE.
SECTION VIEWS DRAWN
IN RHINO BY ED SYMON.

B. SAURON'S FORGE.
SCALE MODEL, AMANDA
PIEARCEY, LEAD MODEL
MAKER.

C. THE HUMAN VILLAGE OF
TIRHARAD, SOUTHLANDS.
PRODUCTION STILL.

D. THE VILLAGE OF
TIRHARAD, SOUTHLANDS.
ILLUSTRATION IN
PHOTOSHOP OVER DIGITAL
MODEL PLACED INTO A
LOCATION PHOTO BY
JULIEN GAUTHIER.

E. THE VILLAGE OF
TIRHARAD, SOUTHLANDS.
PRODUCTION STILL.

F. BRONWYN PREPARES
MEDICINES IN HER
COTTAGE IN THE
VILLAGE OF TIRHARAD.
PRODUCTION STILL.

schedule challenges. How was I to proceed? Well, not by myself of course.

The show runners, JD Payne and Patrick McKay, have a deep passion for Tolkien and a clear story they want to tell. To get me going, they laid out five guideposts:

–It had to feel “real”—they did not want high fantasy make-believe. They wanted the audience to believe that this is truly how and where elves, dwarves, Harfoots, orcs, and two very different sorts of men lived, worked and loved.

–They wanted the sets to be as practical as possible, using VFX only when absolutely necessary.

–The audience should be able to clearly identify a culture should they be dropped into the middle of a scene, from any single still frame.

–It had to fit into the budget and schedule Amazon was willing to expend.

–Most importantly, it had to feel like Middle Earth. It had to be true to Tolkien’s words.

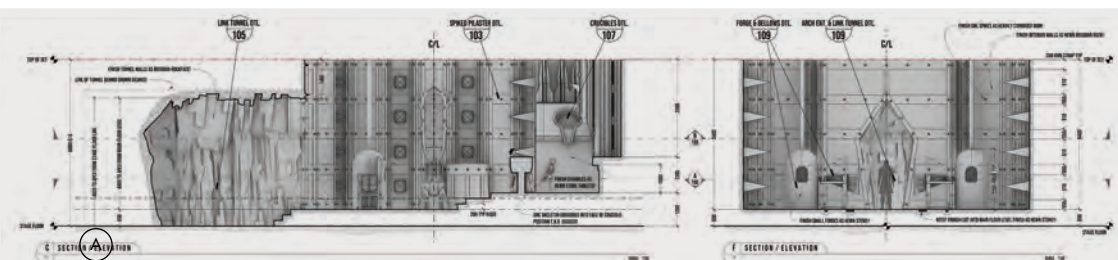
JA Bayona, the director of the first two episodes, landed in New Zealand the same time I did. He

had a very exciting—and very expansive—vision for the series, equal to the breadth of the words in the scripts and the audiences’ expectations of Tolkien’s world. To get to the heart of that, he wanted at least one piece of fully developed key art for every scene in those episodes: about one hundred fifty pieces of key art in a very short time. As daunting as that appeared, it created a path to answer many questions right up front about so many issues, helping to set the tone for the whole series.

But in addition to those keyframes, work had to continue on specific designs that needed to start being built almost immediately, along with design work on the other six episodes. Fortunately, I discovered the production had an amazing crew of local Kiwi and international talent, with a strong Art Department still in LA. Adapting crew to the workload required meant that over the next twenty-three months, the series had Art Departments working on up to five continents and two islands. Literally, the sun never set on our Art Department; there was always somebody working somewhere in the world.

To sort out what all those people needed to do, I first sat down with New Zealand Supervising Art Director Jules Cook, and we figured out what we could quickly feed Phil Chitty’s remarkable construction teams. To create the design-build-install-shoot-strike work plan, and to wrestle the budget, we brought in Supervising Art Director Don Macaulay from Vancouver. To oversee the US team, and to specifically guide the concept design process in LA, we added Iain McFadyen as the US Art Director.

This led—not always in the smoothest of paths!—to a process where Jules and the NZ teams, concentrated on the human southlands and the Harfoot elements that could be adjusted later while I worked out concept designs with director JA through the development of the key frames. Another NZ Art





Director, Jill Cormack, not only worked with Don to organize the NZ art crews but oversaw the elvish sets.

Meanwhile, I worked with Iain on the concepts of dwarven kingdom. As we got through all the concepts, including digital and physical modeling, the work would then shift back to the Art Directors and Set Designers in NZ to break down, adjust and get them built.

Simultaneously, while I was orchestrating the work of over twenty concept artists, off I went to explore the breadth of New Zealand, by plane, car and helicopter, with the incomparable location manager, Kevin Spring.

The village, Tirharad, was thus built into a lovely hollow on a farm near Auckland. Bronwyn's house was built on a hillside above it. This revealed one of the trickiest bits of shooting in New Zealand. Each part of the country is controlled by local councils, whose permission must be secured, and whose rules must be abided. (In some cases, the production also needed to interface with the local iwis, the tribal councils of the Māori.)

The crew were two weeks into filming the village when the pandemic shut us down in March 2020. The set sat unused, in the elements, for months, aging gracefully into its surroundings. While all the crafts had done a remarkable job with their teams





A

A. THE GREAT COURT OF LINDON (ELVISH KINGDOM) CONCEPT ART BY ROBERTO FERNÁNDEZ CASTRO. THE FIRST PIECE OF ART PRESENTED TO THE SHOW RUNNERS, IT SET THE TONE FOR HOW MIDDLE EARTH WOULD BE APPROACHED.

B. THE UNDYING LANDS TAPESTRY IN THE HALLS OF THE COURT OF LINDON (ELVISH). PRODUCTION STILL.

C. HALL OF MEMORIAL TREES, LINDON (ELVISH) HAND SKETCH ENHANCED IN PHOTOSHOP BY JOHN HOWE AND CLAY MAQUETTE BY NEIL LAFFOLEY.

D. GALADRIEL HONORING HER BROTHER FINROD, IN THE HALL OF MEMORIAL TREES, LINDON (ELVISH). PRODUCTION STILL.

making this set look ancient and settled, nothing can beat the hand of Mother Nature. There was even moss growing on the real stone masonry Darren Cox and his team set and carved.

Another surprise of shooting in NZ: its forests. For the Second Age elvish kingdom of Lindon, the production wanted a young, bright forest. Kate Hawley, the genius costume designer, had remarkably inspiring look-boards for each of the cultures, and her elvish board held an image of a pathway through a golden aspen forest that looked like both nature and architecture, and shimmered with a Golden Age beauty. Working with the Illustrator Rob Fernández Castro, I developed a series of illustrations with that as our guiding idea.

There were a dozen or more sets to place in that forest. One would think that finding a forest to shoot in would be a snap. Alas, for a very green country, New Zealand has almost no usable forests—they are either pine plantations, or they are subtropical bush, or both nestled together. Everywhere one looks, there are punga, giant tree ferns, or nikaus, short, spindly palm trees that didn't feel like Middle Earth. The lovely beech

forests of the South Island were too far away and too hard to access. The series needed to build our forest.

Originally, I had hoped to build it outside on a backlot, but, being a very green country, it rains—a LOT—in New Zealand. To stage it went. Jill Cormack and I worked with Set Designers in both LA and NZ to come up with a set where we

could rearrange platforms and shift trees to create multiple locations. The greens team, led by Simon Lowe, built one hundred twenty-five aspen trees entirely from scratch on metal frames with cast bark skins, artificial leaves and realistic bends to their trunks. The Great Tree and its rock were sculpted and bedecked with over 14,700 handmade tri-lobed leaves. Simon's team also cut and painted literally hundreds of thousands of leaves, some with metallic gold edging, to cover the ground of the sound stage-filling set. There were thousands of saplings, ferns and white flowers to complete the environment. And a flowing stream, which became a waterfall in the VFX extension.

The Art Department worked with the multiple assistant directors and producers to figure out a timeline to allow for all the changeovers. For one set, it was important to me to show the elves creating, not just elegantly lounging about, so, to also tell an important visual story of Valinor, a tapestry was designed that elves could be weaving on camera. This design came late in prep, so the 24-foot by 24-foot piece could not be hand woven, but set decorator Megan Vertelle had a secret weapon up her sleeve, two remarkable soft-goods experts, Jillian Chitty

and Sarah Bailey Harper. They found a legacy weaver in France who could machine loom it in time. (Time after time, in sets as diverse as an orc tunnel, a magnificent sailing ship or a dying king's bedroom, they came up with similar magic.) Then a scenic team worked with dyes, paint and metal leaf to soften the machined look.



B



There was one environment the Art Department could not make in that unit set, the Hall of Memorial Trees, where the elves tended to images of their fallen, carved into the living trunks of trees. We dug deep into the Tolkien Legendarium to see who to feature here, and John Howe designed a dozen soulful sculptures which were lovingly brought to life by Neil LaFolley and his team of sculptors.

One of the first things I did was go back to Tolkien's own drawings and paintings, studying their graphic quality. I dug into the broad history of Middle Earth drawings by Alan Lee and John Howe—and was graced with the ability to work with John Howe every day, to keep the pulse of Tolkien's DNA in our details.

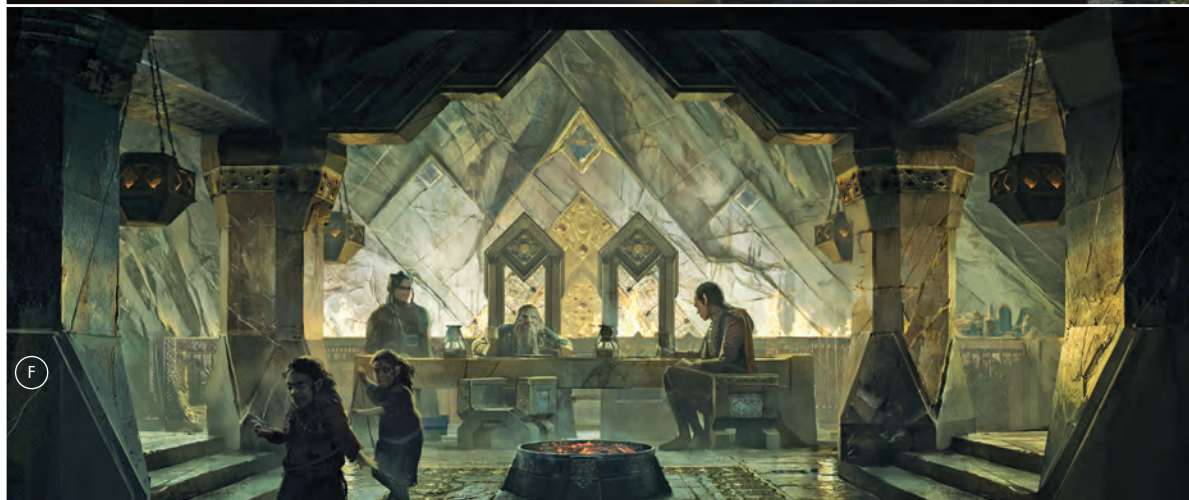
As we immersed ourselves in the details of Tolkien's vast world, they guided our design. What audiences know of the dwarven kingdom under the Misty Mountains are the ruins seen in the films. It was important to capture a Second Age culture that is based on the reverence for the stone that Gimli speaks of when he describes the glittering caves in *LOTR*: "We would tend these glades of flowering stone... With cautious skill, tap by tap—a small chip of rock and no more, perhaps in a whole anxious day..." In our Second

Age Khazad-Dûm the dwarves honor the forms of the rock, more than they impose their will upon them.

I went back to those early drawings of Alan Lee and John Howe to find elements of dwarvish architecture that were irregular and more intimate. From there, I explored various corners, both in wide shots and interiors, with many illustrators working simultaneously to speed up our process. In the end, though, it took exploring the world in 3D to resolve it, working in Unreal, SketchUp and Rhino, finding ways to give a sense of scale but still respecting the shapes of the stone and even finding a sense of intimacy.

E. DWARFISH GUARDS LEAD ELROND THROUGH KHAZAD-DÛM (DWARVES). COMPOSITE SHOT—BRIDGE AND BRAZIER ARE PRACTICAL, THE SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT IS CG.

F. PRINCE DURIN AND PRINCESS DISA ENTERTAIN ELROND IN DURIN'S HOME, KHAZAD-DÛM (DWARVES). ILLUSTRATION BY ROBERTO FERNÁNDEZ CASTRO. PHOTOSHOP OVER SKETCHUP MODEL BY DANIEL JENNINGS AND GORDON STOTZ.





A

A. ELROND AND CELEBRIMBOR APPROACH THE GATES OF KHAZAD-DÛM (DWARVES) ILLUSTRATION BY GERHARD MOZSI. CINEMA 4D, 3D COAT AND PHOTOSHOP OVER PHOTO OF NZ LOCATION.

B. MODEL VIEWS OF SET PIECES FOR THE EXT. GATES OF KHAZAD-DÛM, BACKLOT BUILD (DWARVES). DONE IN RHINO BY SAM COTTERELL.

C. INT. DURIN'S HOME, KHAZA-DUM (DWARVES)- A COMPOSITE SHOT BLENDING TWO SCALES. THE FG AND THE DEEP BG ARE "LARGE SCALE" WHILE ELROND AND HIS TABLE, CHAIR AND PROPS WERE SHOT IN "STORY SCALE."



B

The long history of dwarves informed much the show's design. We took clues from the words of the *Song of Durin*, even incorporating those phrases into carvings within the rock. Another tricky thing about dwarves is that their god, Aulë, is married to the goddess of nature, Yavanna. To honor her, they rarely cut down trees, so very little of their craft is made with wood, using it only when its tensile strength and flexibility cannot be reproduced with another material. So, making furniture posed a unique challenge. Megan had a brilliant idea: while much furniture could be made from metal, some could be petrified wood, a beautiful material. Throughout all our designs, we found similar ways to subtly weave in the Legendarium.

Logistically, one of the trickiest things about dwarves was their scale. The actors playing them

are averaged-sized folk, but dwarves are generally seventy-five percent the size of humans. This was approached in several ways. First, everything in their world was scaled up in bulk or shape, so that made the actors look smaller. Their chairs are tall or broad, their goblets chunky.

Then the production had to work out how to put them in scenes with characters who are ostensibly taller than them. This meant we had to figure out how to adjust for the scale of their world. There would be "Story Scale" sets, where things were the correct size for a human, elf or orc, and "Large Scale" sets, where things were scaled appropriately to the smaller races of dwarves and Harfoots. The trick was when the two worlds had to be shown in the same shot. We didn't want to force the actors to work separately in green screen environments, nor did we have the resources or



C



stage space to build the same set in two different scales. So, the VFX team, led by supervisor Jason Smith, and abetted by the scale supervisor, Tim Capper, would take each scene where we needed differently scaled characters and work with the directors to sort out how we could build forced perspective gags or work out sections of the set to allow for multiple techno-crane match moves. This meant we built some props and dressing or a few individual set pieces in two scales—and occasionally there was no way out but through a green screen—but in almost all cases, we were able to figure out how to use the same set to shoot the two scales. Movie magic, indeed!

Once these elements were all worked out, the NZ Art Department wrestled them into buildable sets. Next, an army of skilled artisans cut CNC structural ribbing for the stonework, applied remarkable stone skins and molded real plaster ornament. Then talented scenics, under Giles Smith, layered paint, resin, crystalline finishes, gold gilt and cast gems to bring these underground worlds to life.

This conceptual resolution of Khazad-Dûm into practical shooting sets encapsulated the methodology the Art Department had to employ to complete the enormous scale of design ROP required. As there was no way that we had enough artists or budget to complete the work in the time we had, and, as much of this work required VFX extensions, we created a small Virtual Art

Department within the Art Department. It was led by the amazing Peter Baustaedter; they formed the pipeline of both baseline VFX concept and modeling/Unreal development and animations.

In addition, due to the nature of this project, I was able to work directly with concept artists in the VFX houses. This kept an institutional knowledge of the design intent embedded in VFX work throughout completion. Julien Gauthier was a key one of these artists, instrumental to the initial design exploration and further development of Númenór.

As with the dwarves, how would the design seen with ROP's Harfoots evolve to be that shown in *LOTR*? One answer—look to the giant wheels of their wonderful hand-built carts...

D. OVERVIEW OF KHAZAD-DÛM (DWARVES). ILLUSTRATION BY YANICK DUSSEAU. PHOTOSHOP PAINTED OVER AN UNREAL MODEL FRAME FROM CONCEPT ARTIST ANDREW LEUNG.

E. HARFOOT TINKER'S CART. ILLUSTRATION DONE IN PHOTOSHOP BY JAMES CARSON.





Harfoots are even smaller in story scale than dwarves, so the production had similar issues to resolve with their props and dressing. With several Illustrators, we explored fun images of their camp. Matt Cornelius, the prop master, set out to create those props, using every trick in the book from handcraftsmanship to 3D printing to produce an army's worth of props for all these cultures.

I particularly admired how he and his team worked out what each culture would eat. The Harfoots had overscale roots, leaves, nuts and berries. (Props made ten thousand large-scale gummy blackberries for Harfoot children to eat in the berry patch.) There were the elegant, mostly vegetarian and very artistic meals for elves, and robust (overscale) root vegetables and meat shanks for dwarves. The very simple and spare fare of the Southlanders contrasted with the elegant and rich foods of the Númenóreans, including custom-made fish from the Sundering Seas.

The Harfoots also had one of the three language systems created for this series. They are not a literate people, but the story required some way to record what they needed to know to safely travel. I asked Daniel Reeve, who has been doing calligraphy and maps for the Tolkien world over several decades, to come up with a system of simple pictographs that we could annotate into the "star book" Sadoc carries, and to also carve on the wood supports of the Harfoot tents, telling the story of each family, and to

carve into the rock to tell the entire clan's story. Language is such an important part of Tolkien's work and it was a privilege to also create a new written language for the Númenóreans, one that shifted, as human creations do, through several forms and shapes throughout the thousands of years of that civilization. Daniel was up to that task as well, developing a whole history of how Adûnaic writing evolved from the Tengwar of the elves into its own specific alphabet.

The kingdom of Númenór reflected that history in its architecture as well. What this means in terms of design hasn't premiered by the time this article is to come out, so I can't describe it just yet. But it required building a city on a back lot, one that could reflect those thousands of years of shifting cultural influences.

As much as all of that was a juicy and wonderful challenge, my favorite part of Númenór were its ships. (New Zealand, with its sailing traditions, is the perfect place to build a boat!) The crew had built the swan ship for Galadriel's trip sailing to the Undying Lands, a challenge itself, with its fine elvish finishes in enamel, gold and mother of pearl, and its 20-foot-long 3D printed swan head. Elendil's ship was a whole step beyond. It needed to be almost twice as long to hold the people required by the story, it needed functional sails to show the skill of its crews, and it had to work effortlessly on SFX supervisor Dean Clarke's gimbal. The design process was a long journey



through Greek triremes and grand Venetian barges, with influences from a remarkable Māori ship model in the Auckland Maritime Museum that was carved from the keel of an albatross. We felt it needed to appear graceful, powerful and fast. It wasn't until I stumbled upon an image of a double-masted Chinese junk and saw how its sails resembled the crown of Gondor, that we finally cracked the design. Instead of the shape of that crown representing eagles' wings, it suddenly occurred to me that it could be honoring the sails of the ships that rescued the Faithful when (spoiler alert) the gods sink Númenór below the waves!

A. THE BRANDYFOOT CART IN THE HARFOOT ENCAMPMENT, THE WILDS OF RHOVANION. ILLUSTRATION DONE IN PHOTOSHOP BY JAMES CARSON.

B. THE BRANDYFOOT FAMILY TRAVELING THROUGH THE WILDS OF RHOVANION. (HARFOOTS). PRODUCTION STILL.

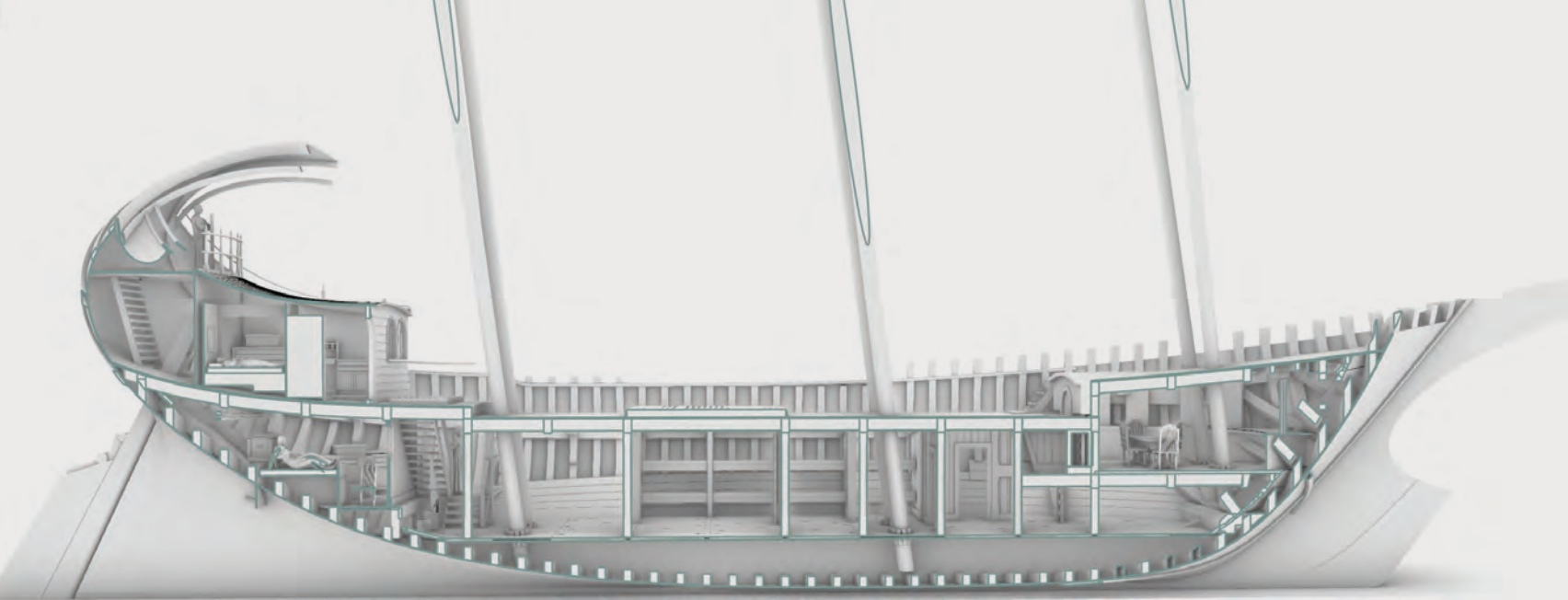
C. SADOCS CART, HARFOOT ENCAMPMENT. ILLUSTRATION BY SIMON MURTON.

D. HARFOOT ENCAMPMENT, THE WILDS OF RHOVANION. PRODUCTION STILL.

E. ELENDIL'S SHIP, NÚMENÓR (HUMAN) ILLUSTRATION DONE IN PHOTOSHOP BY ANDREA DOPASO BASED ON 3D MODELS BY RON MENDELL.

F. NÚMENÓREAN SHIPS RACING ALONG THE COAST OF NÚMENÓR. PRODUCTION STILL.





A

A. ELENLIL'S SHIP, DIGITAL CUT-AWAY MODEL BY KEVIN CROSS AND RON MENDELL.

B. EXAMPLES OF ANDÛNAIC SCRIPT (HUMAN). GRAPHIC LAYOUT BY DANIEL REEVE AND JORDAN YOUNGBLOOD.

C. & D. GUARDS' SHIELDS, AND GALADRIEL'S HEIRLOOM DAGGER (NOLDOR ELVES). ILLUSTRATIONS BY IONA BRINCH AND JEREMY HANNAH AND TAHIVI TRENOR-HUNT.

E. THE GATES OF OSTIRITH. SET PHOTO.

F. THE GREAT HALL, THE KINGDOM OF LINDON (ELVISH) ILLUSTRATION BY ROBERTO FERNÁNDEZ CASTRO. OVER A MODEL BY SHARI RATUFF AND MARINA STOJANOVIC.

When the cast, in Kate's amazing costumes and armor, straddled the decks, when the wind machines started to blow, the gimbal to rock, and water to crash over the bow—while actual sailors as extras manned the sails, my childhood fantasies of sailing the seven seas of adventure sprang amazingly to life.

And there is so much more in future episodes I can't talk about yet!

There is no way I can acknowledge all of the people who helped this come to life, from the skills of embroiderers, to the craftsmanship of blacksmiths, to the medics that helped keep the crew safe and healthy. At its largest, the Art Department had about seventy-five people in it, but that does not count the dozens of others who cycled in and out over more than two years. Construction, at its peak, had over five hundred craftsmen, staff and laborers. There were

hundreds of people working in set decoration and props, and more in the workshops of WETA and other vendors.

And the weapons! Designing the weapons of Middle Earth was not even on my radar when I agreed to take on this project, but it turned out to be one of my favorite parts of the job. Joe Dunkley and his team at WETA worked tirelessly, through multiple iterations of the weapons for each culture, striving to come up with pieces that were specific to each race and to each character. In the long run, they made over one thousand weapons (and twenty-five hundred arrows). These had to be not only striking, but practical and safe.

This was the opportunity of a lifetime. And it wasn't exactly the response I expected when emailing a producer three years ago.

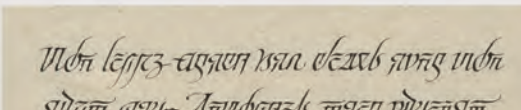
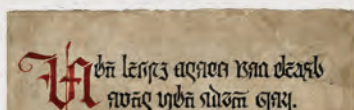
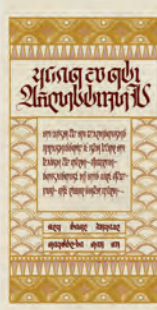
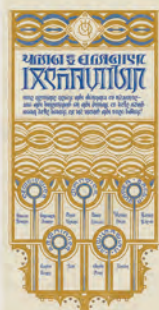
I had known Lindsey Weber through several Bad

Robot projects, and she was now producing what would become known as *The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power*. So, when a question arose to explore an Amazon Studios non-film-related project with my husband, I gave her a call. Turns out there wasn't a department for his type of work, but, what, she asked, was I doing...? **ADG**

Númenoreans - Contemporary Adûnaic (Examples)



B





(C)



(D)



(E)



(F)

Ramsey Avery (Episodes 1-8),
Rick Heinrichs (Episodes 1 & 2),
Production Designers
Jules Cook, Don Macaulay,
Supervising Art Directors
Jill Cormack, Mark Robins,
Senior Art Directors
Jason Brown, Kim Jarrett, Iain McFayden,
Ross McGarva, Andy McLaren, Mark Stephen, Helen Strevens,
Philip Thomas, Ken Turner, Peter Baustaedter (VXF),
Art Directors
Gabriel Kearney, Simon Hall, Joseph Leary,
On-Set Art Directors
Christopher Dexter, Colette Mullin,
Ross Perkin, Todd Smythe, Sam Storey,
Brendon Sweeney, Yvonne Yip,
Assistant Art Directors
Tristan Bourne, Tim Clissold, Kevin Cross,
Tim Devine, Forest Fischer, Tom Frohling, Will Giles,
Kevin Loo, Anne McGrath, Zahra Minogue,
David Moreau, Paulina Piasta, Shari Ratliff, Barry Read,
Karjius Schlogl, Shamim Seifzadeh, Marina Stojanovic,
Rachel Van Baarle, Sam Dobrec, Gordon Stotz,
Set Designers
Sarah Contant, Daniel Jennings, Ron Mason,
Ron Mendell, Andrea Onorato, Ed Symon,
Specialist Set Designers
Samuel Cotteral, Nick Redmond,
Haroun Barazanchi, Sarah Mosley,
Draughtspersons
Amanda Pearcey (Head), Dimitri Frost, Jeff Frost,
Annie McGrath, Laura Stephenson, Lou Zutavern,
Model Makers
Liam Beck, Mauro Borelli, Pablo Carpio, James Carson,
Roberto Fernández Castro, Ryan Church, Oscar Chichoni,
Steve Cormann, Sylvain Coutouly, Ryan Church,
Rodolfo Damaggio, Pablo Dominguez Aguilar,
Andrea Dopaso, Yanick Dusseault, Kim Frederiksen,
Julien Gauthier, Alexander Gustaveson, John Howe,
Jaime Jones, Jorgen Klubien, Igor Knezevic,
Andrew Leung, Stephane Levallois, Gerhard Mozsi,
Simon Murton, Till Nowak, Eduardo Peña Garzon,
Jamie Rama, Emmanuel Shiu, Dean Sherriff,
Evan Shipard, Stephen Tappin, Filippo Valsecchi,
Imery Watson, Stephen Zavalla,
Concept Artists
Monica Fedrick, Yip Lee, Sean Andrew Murray, Tina Charad,
Graphic Artists
Elayne Chan, Dylan Coburn, Ryan McQuarters,
Storyboard Artists
Megan Vertelle, Victor Zolfo,
Set Decorators

PRODUCTION DESIGN

Production Design Credit Waivers

BY LAURA KAMOGAWA, CREDITS ADMINISTRATOR



The following requests to use the Production Design screen credit were granted at its April and May meetings by the ADG Council upon the recommendation of the Production Design Credit Waiver Committee.

FILM:

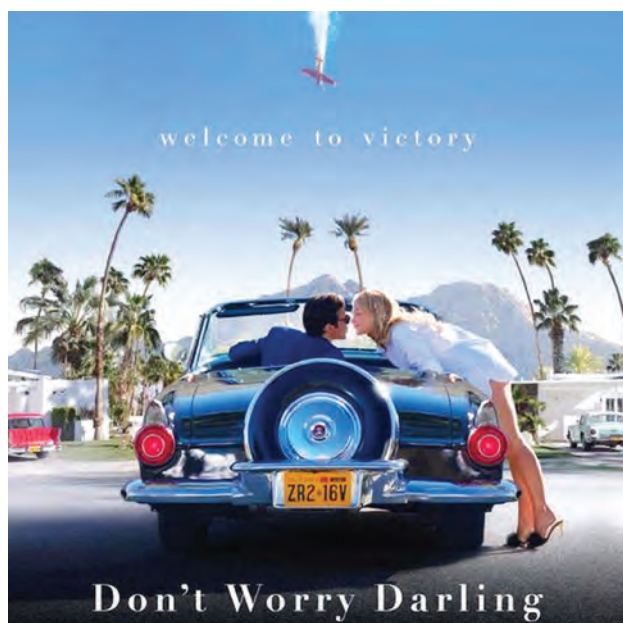
William Arnold – YOUR PLACE OR MINE – Netflix
Megan Bell – OUT OF THE BLUE – Squid Farm Productions
Michael Corenblith – MR. HARRIGAN'S PHONE – Netflix
Almitra Corey – 13: THE MUSICAL – Netflix
Theresa Guleserian – ME TIME – Netflix
Mark Hutman – DOG GONE – Netflix
Nate Jones – BOTTOMS – MGM Studios
Steve Saklad – ARE YOU THERE GOD? IT'S ME, MARGARET – Lionsgate
Mailara Santana – THE PLANE – Lionsgate

SERIES:

Mark Freeborn – GREASE: RISE OF THE PINK LADIES – Paramount TV
Greg Grande – UNPRISONED – Disney TV
Derek Hill – JACK RYAN – Paramount TV
Chris Kennedy – SHANTARAM – Paramount TV
Andrew Leitch – THE MIGHTY DUCKS: GAME CHANGERS – Disney TV
Lisa Myers – BAMMAS – Disney TV
Denise Pizzini – THE MUPPETS MAYHEM – ABC Signature
Claudia Roque – HIGH DESERT – Apple Studios
Bernardo Trujillo – TALES OF THE WALKING DEAD – Stalwart Productions
Ray Yamagata – AMERICAN GIGOLO – Paramount Television

SHARED PRODUCTION DESIGN CREDIT:

Steve Joyner and Caylah Eddleblute – HYPNOTIC – Solstice Studios



In the next issue:

DON'T WORRY DARLING

Opens September 23, 2022

Katie Byron,

Production Designer

Erika Toth,

Supervising Art Director

Mary Florence Brown,

Art Director

Betty Krul, Argya Sadan, Maggie Srmayan, John Isaac Watters,

Set Designers

Alexandra Maziekien,

Graphic Artist

Rachael Ferrara,

Set Decorator

MEMBERSHIP

Welcome to the Guild

BY EMMANUEL ESPINOZA, MEMBERSHIP DEPARTMENT

During the months of April and May, the following 32 new members were approved by the Councils for membership in the Guild:

ART DIRECTORS

Angus Bernsen – Various commercials
Jordyn Braaten – THE STARS FELL AGAIN –
Rareform Pictures
Marcus Cooley – ELECTRIC JESUS – Hair Band Glory
LLC
Joseph Cox – GEMINI LOUNGE – Gem Z Lounge LLC
Clarisa Garcia-Fresco – GO FOR GRANDMA – Union
Productions
Jared Hartley – FEDERAL HILL – The Beginning LLC
Shiloh Kidd – NATIONAL ANTHEM – House of
Splendor LLC
Francesca Maldonado – IHEART RADIO MUSIC
AWARDS – Tenth Planet Productions
Felicia Rein – DROP THE BEAT – Fox Alternative
Matt Rumer – THE TRAINER – Upload Films
Danielle Scott – 2022 KIDS CHOICE AWARDS – GHS
Productions
Stephanie Spiegel – UNTITLED LG SERIES – Learning
Depot LLC
Jacob Tremblay – Various commercials
Jenny Wentling – JESUS REVOLUTION – Jesus
Revolution LLC

ASSISTANT ART DIRECTORS

Kristen Budke – DAISY JONES AND THE SIX – Big
Indie Pictures
Beatrice Cerezo – HISTORY OF THE WORLD:
PART II – TCTV
Michael Chung – THE CONSULTANT – MGM Studios
Micaela Edwards – MRS. DAVIS – Warner Bros. TV
Roxy Hua – OPPENHEIMER – Universal Pictures
Rupali Ingle – STAR TREK: PICARD – CBS
Haven Kim – BROWNIE – Apple Studios

Ritika Ramesh – NEW YEAR'S EVE: MILEY CYRUS
SPECIAL – Rebel Artichoke Inc.
Evan Seccombe – PROMISED LAND – ABC Signature
Kristy West – SHELL – Salt Spring Media
Shauna Williams – THE WALTONS THANKSGIVING –
Baselight Productions

ASSOCIATE GRAPHIC ARTIST

Nicholas Ray – Associate Graphic Artist – On Air
Design/Astek

GRAPHIC ARTISTS

Joe Chang – Graphic Artist – EXPATS – Amazon
Studios
Dalida Nour – Graphic Artist – HOME DELIVERY –
Cranetown Media

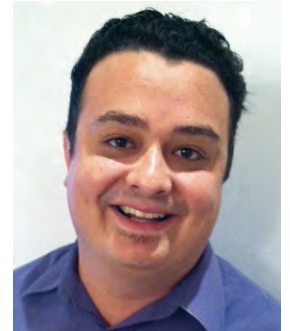
ILLUSTRATORS

Bruce Berkey – Various commercials
David Green – Various commercials
Jasper Yu – Various commercials

SET DESIGNER

Kevin Yoon – AMERICAN SOCIETY – CMS
Productions

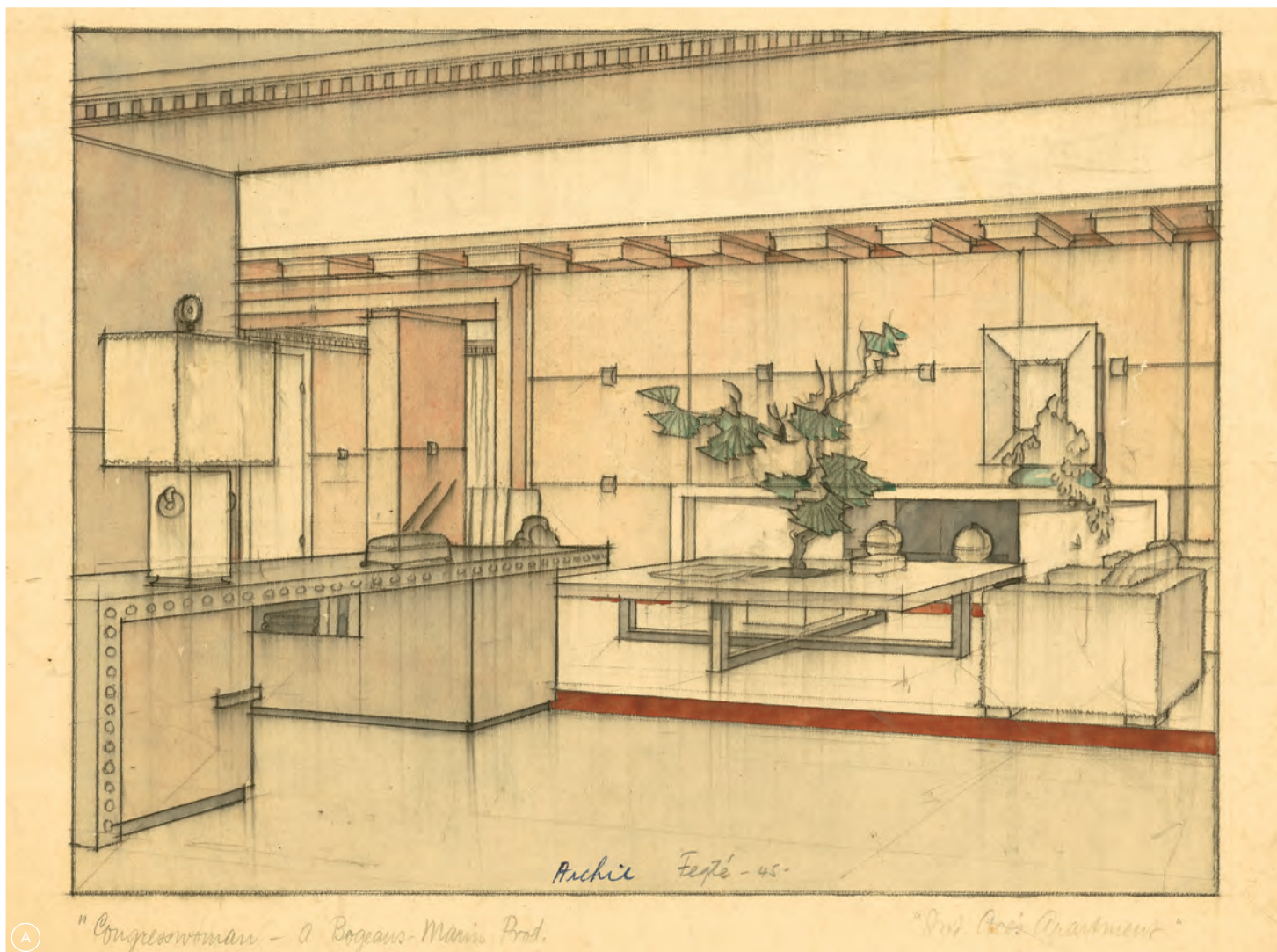
Total membership (at the end of May 2022): 3215



RESHOOTS

SELECTIONS FROM THE ADG ARCHIVES

BY NIKKI RUDLOFF, ASSOCIATE EDITOR



A

The film noir *Mr. Ace* opened in 1946, starring George Raft and Sylvia Sidney. The plot involves a ruthless society woman seeking office who falls in love with a political boss whose help she needs to win.

This illustration was done by the Production Designer Ernst Fegte in charcoal and opaque watercolor on illustration board. Fegte was born in Germany and studied art at Hamburg University. He started working in German cinema creating set murals. He moved to New York and created backgrounds for productions. By the late 1920s, he relocated to Los Angeles and worked for Paramount Studios as the Supervising Art Director. Some films of his include *The Cocoanuts* (29), *Animal Crackers*

(30), *The General Died at Dawn* (36), *The Lady Eve* (41), *I Married a Witch* (42), *The Palm Beach Story* (42), *The Miracle of Morgan's Creek* (43) and *The Uninvited* (44).

In the mid-1940s, Ernst left Paramount and worked on psychological thrillers, science fiction and some TV. Notable works include *Specter of the Rose* (46) and *Destination Moon* (50), *Adventures of Superman* (TV 52-53), *Cavalcade of America* (53-54), *Medic* (55-56) and *Sergeant Preston of the Yukon* (57-58).

He won an Academy Award for Art Direction for *Frenchman's Creek* (44) and was nominated for *Five Graves to Cairo* (43), *The Princess and the Pirate* (44) and *Destination Moon* (50). He was also nominated for an Emmy Award in 1956 for Art Direction on *Medic*.

COURTESY OF THE ADG COLLECTIONS AT THE MARGARET HERRICK LIBRARY, A.M.P.A.S.

A. THIS DRAWING BY ERNST FEGTE DEPICTS AN APARTMENT INTERIOR. IT WAS MADE WITH CHARCOAL AND OPAQUE WATERCOLOR ON ILLUSTRATION BOARD.



YOUR VISION, OUR PRODUCT.

Contact us to get a sample box of
our printable substrates!

AquaFlex	Linoleum
Banner	MDF
Backlit Film	Milkplex
Brushed Silver E-Panel	Mirrorplex
Bus Graphic	Mylars
Carpet	Non-Glare Plex
Catwalk	Self Adhesive vinyl
Clear Adhesive	Show Card
Clear Plex	Textured vinyl
Clear Static Cling	VCH / Marlite
Fabric	White E-panel
Gator board	White Sintra



OA ON AIR DESIGN | **astek**

IATSE Local 800 and 729

onairdesign.com | astek.com | 818.901.9887





Open Saturdays
Delivery Available
Inventory of 12,000+ Items
Conveniently Located in Silverlake
Shop Online at ModernicaProps.com

MODERNICA
PROPS